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A FAST LIFE

ON

THE MODERN HIGHWAY;

BEING

A GLANCE INTO THE RAILROAD WORLD
FROM A NEW POINT OF VIEW.

By JOSEPH TAYLOR.

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS.



TORONTO:
ADAM, STEVENSON & CO. PUBLISHERS.
1894.

**BIBLIOTHEQUE DE LA
VILLE DE MONTREAL**



**COLLECTION
GAGNON**

of the Parliament of Canada, in the year one
hundred and seventy-four, by

PH TAYLOR,

the Minister of Agriculture.

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Respectfully Dedicated

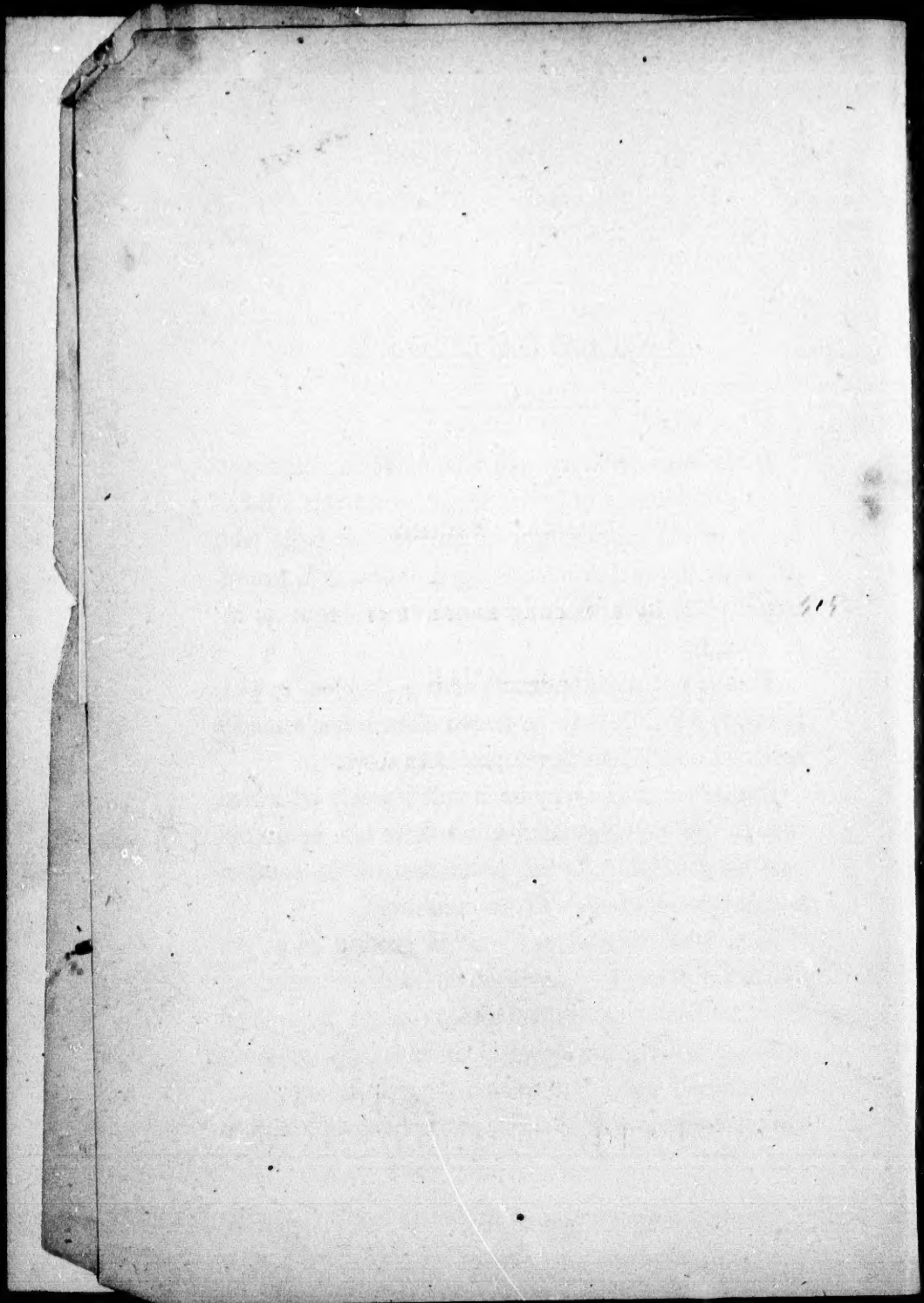
TO

HIS ESTEEMED FRIEND,

W. K. MUIR,

BY

THE AUTHOR.



INTRODUCTORY.

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If the extraordinary man who made two blades of grass grow where only one grew before was a benefactor to his species, how much more so is he who provides the means of making the tedious hours of travel glide by as fleeting moments of exquisite relaxation!

This is not a conundrum; it is a problem in philosophy, which it is to be feared science has scarcely assumed a sufficient development to solve.

But however this may be, it will scarcely be denied that to the well-regulated mind there can be no object so gratifying as the promotion of the comfort and happiness of one's fellow-creatures.

This is a railroad age. It is getting more so. There are those who say that the railroad system of this continent is yet in its infancy; that it is destined to outgrow tenfold its present extent. If that be so, and railroad travel is to increase in the same proportion, it is obvious that those who now spend four or

five hours per diem on the cars will be expected to spend forty or fifty! In fact, like Pope's spider, they will have to "live along the line."

How indispensable, then, it becomes that every one of our citizens should have a thorough comprehension of that marvel of our day — the great railway system of America: its way of working, its idiosyncrasies and associations, and the new and varied forms of social and physical changes which day by day it is interweaving among the mingled web of our lives.

As a contribution to this end, this book is placed in the reader's hands. It is the work of a railroad man, and is intended to afford amusement and instruction combined in wholesome proportions. A friend says that "it will conduce to the pleasure and profit of every trip on the cars made by its reader; for it will place before his mind a constantly recurring series of incident and adventure, ludicrous or pathetic, which will so wrap up and associate themselves in his memory forever after with the every-day experiences of travel, that there shall be new charm and interest in that which heretofore had been esteemed monotonous and uninteresting; and the railroad journey once dreaded as a wearisome penance shall become, as it were, a glance into a new world, with influences, sympathies, and surroundings

of its own hitherto veiled from his eyes." So mote it be.

Others, with a similar aim, perhaps, have struck out in this same path, but have failed. They must have expected to do so. They knew nothing of what they wrote, and how should they essay to teach any thing to others? "If the blind lead the blind, shall they not both fall into the ditch?"

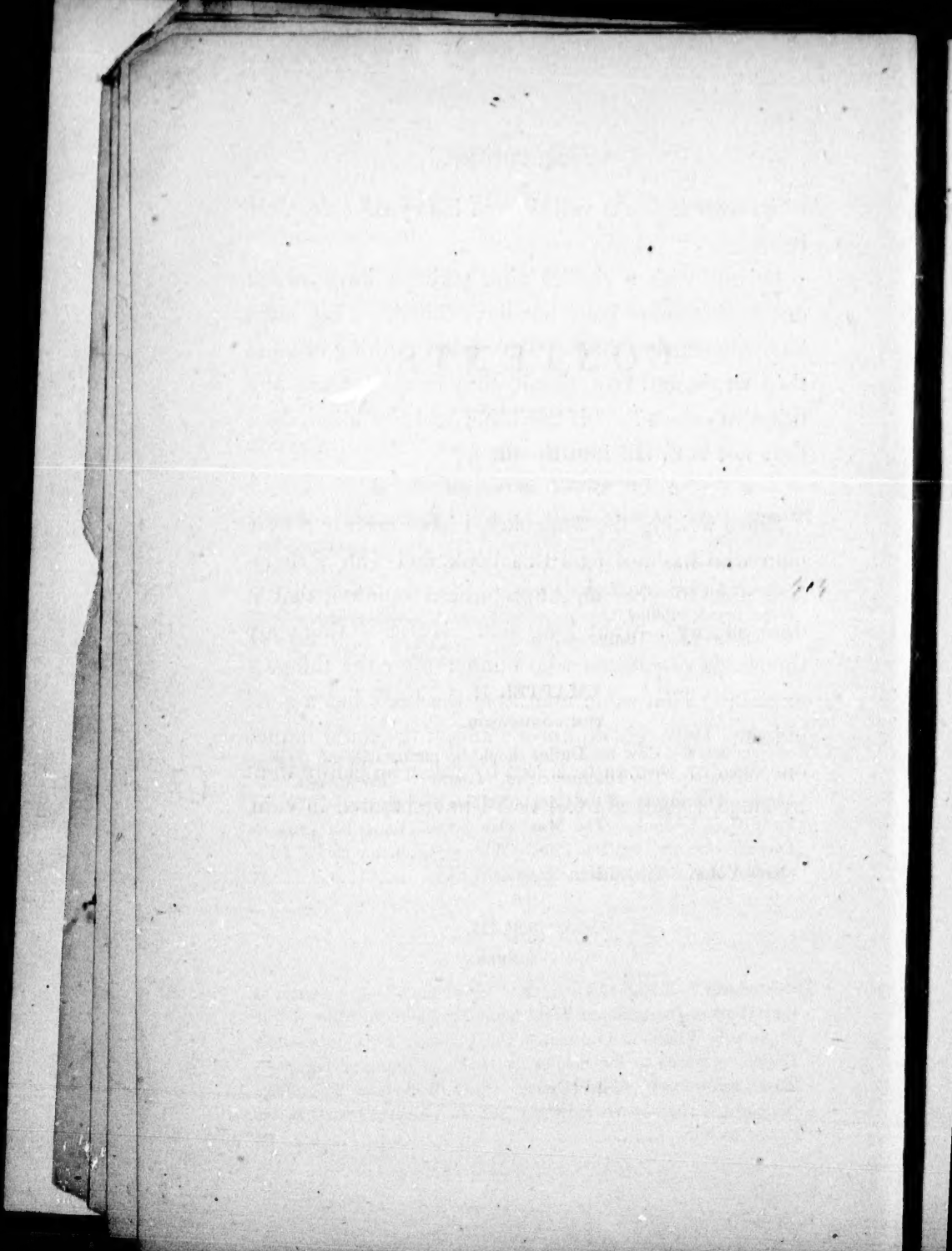
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Since writing the foregoing, I have been told by a man who has not read this book, and who is therefore able to give an unprejudiced opinion, that it does supply a want long felt. He says there are thousands of persons who hunger after the things I explain. That same man says the book has a good object. He ought to know; and, if it should induce one man or woman to travel by rail who before went by stage, I shall not feel that I have labored in vain.

J. T.

NEW YORK, *July*, 1873.

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CHAPTER I

THE AUTHOR EXPOSTULATES.

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THERE is probably no greater nor wide-spread a fallacy than the belief that any man of common sense is fit to jump into a responsible position on a railroad.

No man would think of taking up a mercantile occupation without some previous knowledge of or training in the details of the business.

But some men think they could superintend a railroad without any preparation, and indulge in

criticisms of railroad management which, if applied to their own business, they would consider absurd.

It is not generally realized that the superintendence of railroads and departments of railroads has become a distinct and peculiar profession, in which ability can only be acquired gradually by the increasing light of practical experience.

This is equally true of many other positions connected with railroads. Yet few men wanting occupation would hesitate to seek railroad employment because they know nothing at all about it.

Not very long since "a young man from the country" applied for a situation.

On asking him what he could do, he replied,

"Oh, most any thing."



THE APPLICANT WHO COULD DO ANY
THING.

This seemed pretty confident, so I remarked, merely for form's sake,

"Have you had any railroad experience before?"

He answered that he had not; *he had not been on a railroad before.*

I then said, "Could you drive a locomotive?"

He said he didn't care about driving a locomotive, the nights were too mighty cold just then.

I suggested that if he took a position as fireman it might warm him up a little.

He said he didn't care about chucking in cord-wood.

"Could he wash out a boiler?"

He said he didn't like such a slushy job anyhow.

"Was he a telegraph operator?"

He did not know; he had never tried; he thought not just then.

"Was he a stenographic or phonographic writer?"

This seemed to bewilder him a little, and he finally answered that "he didn't much care about that."

"Did he understand any thing about the freight business, tariffs, and so on."

He "guessed he didn't"—he "didn't care much about them anyhow."

"Could he chop wood?"

He said he always made his old woman chop the wood.

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I told him we could offer him a place as a porter, at about a dollar a day.

This caused him to swear and put on style, so I asked him if he would like to be General Superintendent?

This question did not utterly demolish him, as expected. He was on the point of saying that was the kind of place, when I anxiously informed him that that high position was not vacant just then.

I asked him why he came to the office saying he could "do a'most any thin'," when it appeared he could "do a'most nothin'?"

"Wall," he said, "it's just like this. I was plowin' in the field, and it was mighty hot; the sweat was runnin' down my face quick. I began to think it was a pretty tough way of livin', especially when I only got a dollar and fifty cents a day out of it; and just then my old woman moves up to me, and says, 'Jacob, why don't ye go for a place on the railroad?' Says I, 'You're right, Mary,' and here I am."

"Go back home," said I, "and send Mary."

So Jacob left the office a disconsolate man, and the victim to the general delusion that any person with common sense is fit to jump into a railroad position.

The following are a few choice

APPLICATIONS FOR SITUATIONS.

The first is from a fond, gushing parent, seeking employment for his innocent lad, only thirty-two years of age:

"RESPECTED AND DEAR SIR,—'Happy is the man that hath his kwivver full of them,' as the Salmist says. I have got a sweet lad; he is as quick as litten-in', and is going into his 32th year. At his time of life most men would only be in their 21th year.—he's so kwick. When he was a hinfant he would say he would be a railrode man. He is full of the thort of a railrode life; and though I say it as should not, I never see a lad hoe turnips so kwick in all my days. He has wrote a verse wich runs like a him; it is as follows:

'I choose to be a Brakesman,
If I might be a flower;
To run along the tops of cars,
And screw up the brakes.'

"He also wrote another him, which begins like these:

'How doth the busy boot-black
Improve each shining hour,' etc.

"Now, respected sir, can you help him to reach

his go! He is cute to a degree. If you want a good operator, HE COULD SOON LEARN! 'Do a good turn when you can,' as the treadmill says to the con-



"I'D CHOOSE TO BE A BRAKEMAN."

vick. Please note: He enters on his 38st year on Wednesday; and it would be elegant to give him your offer on that date. * * * * *"

The second is from a sanguine individual, but not at all dangerous:

"SIR,—Last time I went over your road I said to a friend of mine in the same car, 'What a all-fired shame it is to see a splendid road like this going to the bad for the want of a little good management.'

"He says, says he, 'That's so—truest word you ever let out.'

"We sat and thought about it, and finally he says, says he, 'Why don't you get the management of it yourself?'

"'Nonsense,' says I.

"'O. K.,' says he; 'if you don't apply for it, I shall write and get it for you. I've spoke.'

"Now, my friend is a man as does a thing sure if he says he has a mind to, and I reckon he's just wrote you on the matter.

"Don't take any notice of what he says about the subscriber, though I do think your road is about an age behind the day.

"It wants waking up, and I think I am the feeble individual that can do it.

"I would not wish to put you out of your place,



THE YOUNG FELLOW WHO KNOWS
HOW TO RUN A ROAD.

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and throw you and your family on the world, my dear sir—not by a jugful—don't think so for a moment; but I do want to help your road, which being a good one, only wants some snap and ginger to make it the best route in the western hemisphere.

“I want to stand by you, and give you the benefit of my experience. I have not been on a railroad before, but I know a heap about freight rates, having been a agent for a house in Skowhegan for quite a spell.

“I'd like to be Assistant Superintendent, and just let you see what I can do—I've got some go into me.

“Telegraph your terms, and don't be afraid of putting them too low. I do not wish to deprive you of my help by putting the figure too high.

“ * * * * * ”

The third is a trying application, and one which it is 'ard to refuse. The cry of suffering 'umanity is 'ard to be withstood.

“DEAR SIR,—It is 'ard to be a houtcast in this vale of tears, where there is pain enough without 'aving it hadded to by the unsympathizin' 'art.

“Hi 'ave a brother, wich 'e are a sorter 'Parier'—a sufferin' man under the ban of society.

"Now it is 'ard to ban a man, and slam the door of the world in 'is face, so to speak.

"A few years ago 'e 'eld a 'igh position in a bank; and when 'e left 'is duty to go for 'is 'olidays in Canada, they found somethin' wrong in 'is haccounts hamountin' to \$8000.

"The pore ill-treated fellow 'as spent 'is hall, and hi can't keep 'im hany longer doin' nothin'. Hi understood a cashier's place his vacant hat one hof your stations. Try 'im—hit his 'ard to ban a man.

"Hi hanswer for 'is hability—besides, it would be a charity to him and hi, 'e's so 'ard hup. Address 'Sneakville P. O.,' to * * * * *"

The next is from one of those sublime geniuses who too frequently are applicants for such poor employment as a railroad can afford:

"DEAR SIR,—Although I am what I am, I'm not ashamed to say I want a place.

"I would like to begin as a telegraph operator, but any thing else would do as well. I don't know any thing of operating at present, not being an operator; but I am heavy on electricity, and would like to find a man who knows more about it than I can tell him. I am open to bet that man from \$5 to \$1000 that I can spot him.

"I reckon your company makes its own electric flood like most others, and I guess at a hefty cost.

"I have patented a arrangement whereby operators can use litenin' for sending telegraphs, saving quite a item. Give me a place, and I'll fix the machine up.

"I'll bet you any amount from \$5 to \$1000 that I save enough litenin' summer nights to charge your wires through the fall and winter.

"Write, statin' terms, to me, care of Commodore V—. I'm seeing the old man just now about fixing up three of my machines.

"Yours truly (without prejudice),
" * * * * * "

The fifth is an application which is a sample of many:

"SIR,—I am told you want some good smart men on your road; and judging from what I see when I was on it a few days agone, I shed think you do want 'em purty bad.

"What pay could you give to a real live go-ahead man?

"Name your terms, and if they are sech as I could close with, I'll come right along. But I would not do this for every fool.

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THE YOUNG LADY APPLICANT.

"Have not had any R. R. experience yet, but reckon can see as much with 1 eye as most R. R. men with 2. In case of a smash-up, I'm a slap-up Homeopathy doctor. Write next mail sure, stating your figure, to me, at St. Nicholas Hotel.

"Yours,

* * * * *

Here is an application which it is hard for a railroad man to resist.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I am (by nature) a female—a tender, confiding creature called a female—and am shut out (by exclusive man) from doing things which women can do every bit as smart as they can. I do not indorse Mrs. C. S., S. B. A., O. L., and others; I am too young and artless for such sentiments; but I do think I can do something to help man in his daily toil, and strew some roses in his road of life. Hearing that your feelings toward our sex are the latest out, I write to ask you would you give me a situation on your railroad? I don't want to be an engineer or a female operator, but I yearn to do something. As I said before, I am young and artless. Let me, my dear (I hope not hard-hearted) sir, have a place near you. Let me be your spaniel to fetch and carry; let me be your gentle 'gazelle to glad you with my soft blue eye,' open your letters for you

when you are tired, and carry messages to the (good-looking) clerks in other offices. Let me nestle at your feet and whittle your pencils for you, and in such hot days as these gently fan your fevered brow, or sweetly calm your aching head with my soft, cool, delicate hand, and low, cooing, dove-like voice,

'When other lips and other hearts
Their tales of love shall tell.'

I inclose my C. de V., encircled by a tress of my golden hair. Write at once, please, and say if you wish a gentle gazelle. If your treasurer wants one as well, there is a friend of mine just like me, except a wart.

"Yours anxiously, * * * * *"

The above were all declined by the hard-hearted man to whom they were addressed; and for these reasons:

- No. 1. Too old for such work.
- No. 2. No vacancy.
- No. 3. No place to suit your peculiar case.
- No. 4. Can not alter present arrangements very well.
- No. 5. Apparently inexperienced.
- No. 6. Would advise to try one of the banks—no time to have "fevered brow" fanned.

The foregoing may be thought overdrawn; but they give the reader a fair idea of the degree of fitness of many applicants.

They have a powerful yearning to be railroad men, reminding one of the Bowery song,

"Oh, my name is Jack Keyser, I was born in Spring Garden,
To make me a preacher, my father did try;
But it's no use a-blowin', for I am a hard 'un,
And I'm bound to be a butcher, by heavens, or die!"

Some applicants, knowing the recommendation of experience, attempt to show by the testimonials of some deceased friend, which in some way they have got hold of, that they "know all about it."

They "can't deceive your uncle," however; for, on being questioned, they are sure to allow the feline quadruped to escape from its temporary confinement.

For instance, what locomotive engineer would talk of "stickin' her nozzle agin' the bank;" "sittin' on the safety-valve;" being "snagged by a broken rail;" "sticking on a sand-bank;" call the brake a "rudder," or the cow-catcher the "bow?"

A horsey man would call the throttle the "snaffle," and say she did not "take to her oats," if the engine would not make steam.

As I said before, it is not yet fully realized that the operation of railroads has developed a new and

distinct profession in the practice of which peculiar qualifications are indispensable.

Those men have succeeded best who began their railroad career when they were boys.

In the United States, general superintendents and presidents of railroads are by no means few and far between who entered upon railroad life as messengers, operators, ticket-clerks, or brakemen.

CHAPTER II.

THE CONDUCTOR.

The Conductor.—How his Duties should be performed.—A Lesson in Politeness.—The Discriminative "Guard."—How to put troublesome Passengers off the Cars.—Nellie's Trip by Rail.—The old Lady from Podunk.—The Man who did not know his Duty.—Perkins's Corner, and the Pills.—Why a Conductor should be a married Man.—His onerous Responsibilities.

THE conductor is the most prominent railroad official with whom travelers generally are brought into contact.

He is an important personage.

As he enters the car—the door slamming loudly behind him (car doors always do slam)—and throws a quick glance around, you can read his authority in his features; and although no sound reaches the ear, you know he is saying "Ticketa, please!"

That is the way he speaks if he is a proper conductor; but there are many whose physiognomies plainly declare they have never used such a polite phrase in their lives; or if perchance they did so, it sounded like an imprecation—"Tickets g-r-r-r!"

I know a conductor who always enters the car with

a good-natured smile on his jolly face, as though he sought to make happy another batch of humanity by the benignity of his greeting.



THE CONDUCTOR.

"What is the fare to Perkinsville?" says a young lady with a beseeching, deprecating look.

"\$2 75," replies the polite and radiant conductor, in a tone which conveys to the susceptible young

lady that he considers it a shame *she* should have to pay at all — the honor of conveying her would be enough. But then his inflexible tariff says \$2.75; and as the fair traveler counts the amount into his hand, he seems to accept it because impelled by a sense of duty.



THE CHARMING YOUNG LADY.

He informs her, as he passes on, at what time she will get to Perkinsville. When there, he succeeds in finding time to point out her baggage, to show her the station agent, the proper omnibus, perform similar kind offices for half a dozen other travelers, as well as assisting an aged rheumatically lady with her bonnet-box across



THE RHEUMATIC OLD LADY.

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the tracks—all in the minute or so that the cars are stopping, and repeats these attentions at several stopping-places on the journey. All this, besides attending to his many telegraph orders, specific and

general instructions, and a hundred details affecting his train!

You may say such conductors are scarce. Not on well-managed lines.

If a conductor is naturally of a rude disposition, he learns to mollify it, especially after he has roughly accosted a common kind of man whom he afterward found to be the president of the road; or a plain-looking woman who he did not know was the mother-in-law of the general superintendent.



THE COMMON-LOOKING PERSON WHO
WAS PRESIDENT.

A most affable conductor on an Eastern road, on which many changes of management occurred, said he was bound to be polite whether he liked it or not; he never knew from month to month who were going to be president, directors, or other officers of the road.

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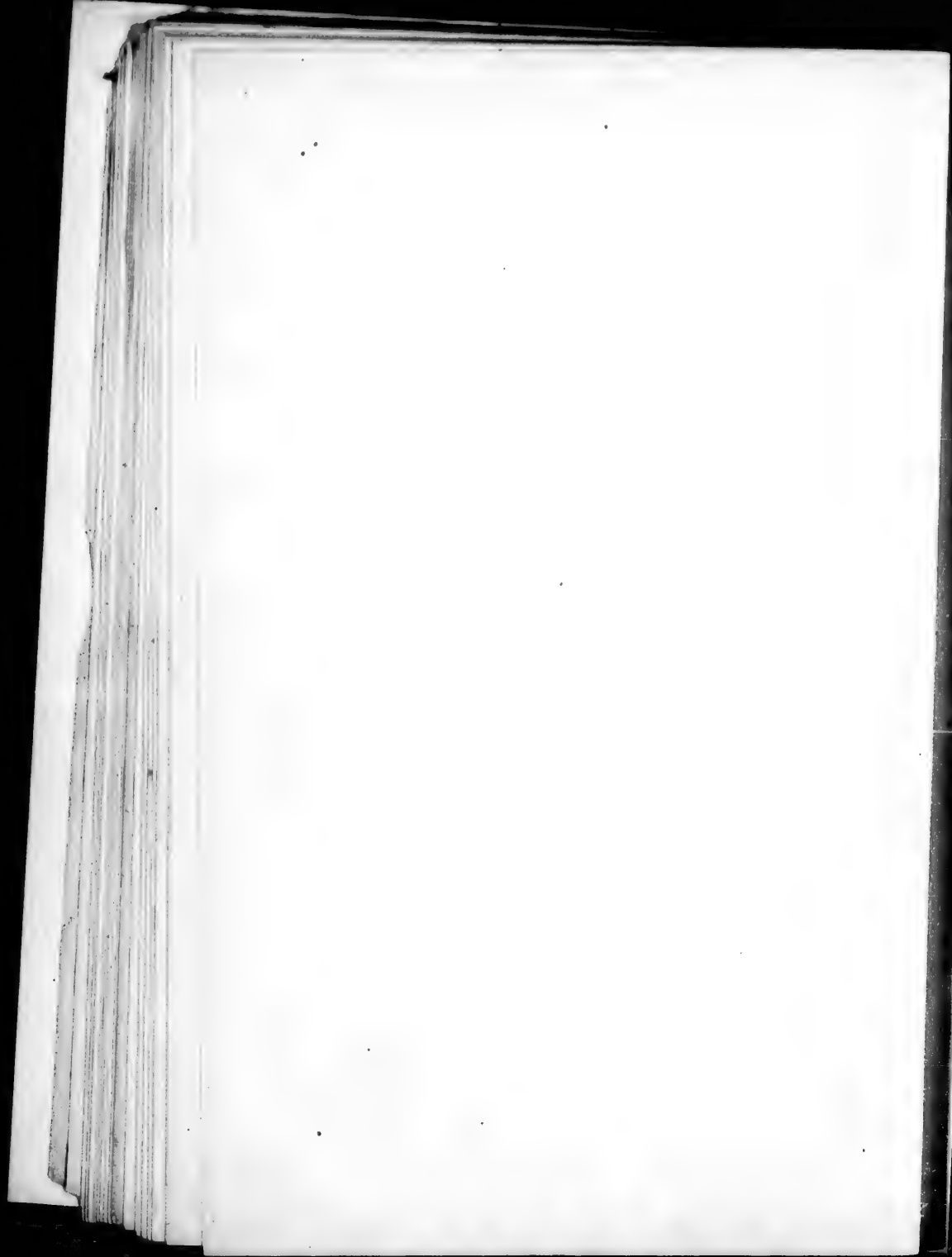
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THE SUPERINTENDENT'S MOTHER-IN-LAW.



The same conductor remarked that on one occasion, when he was in charge of a parlor-car, he threatened to put off the only passenger because he would not pay. The train went on, leaving him and his car in a lonely side track twenty-four hours without any thing to eat or drink; and he found out afterward in dismay that the man who would not pay was the general superintendent!

I asked him if he knew his superintendent now? He replied that he should know him ten miles off on a curvy track.

On European railroads, the "guards," as they are called, are said to graduate their politeness according to the classes of travelers.

There the first, second, and third-class passengers ride in different cars; and it is averred that the guard will approach a first-class car saying, mellifluously, "Passes or Tickets, gentlemen, please." His request in the second-class car is, "Tickets, please;" and his rude order in the third-class is, "Now, then, Tickets!"

But there is no safety for a conductor even in this discrimination. He should be uniformly polite, if for no better reason than his own advantage.

Of course there are occasionally passengers toward whom politeness would be ineffectual, as in the case of the pig-headed man who refuses to pay his fare, or the noisy and obscene person who is a general nuisance.



THE PIG-HEADED MAN WHO REFUSES TO PAY
HIS FARE.

A proper conductor, mindful of his Company's possible liabilities for damages in such a crisis, gently but firmly introduces his left hand in the region of the offender's thorax, and with his right grasps the baggy excrescence about his base (he is always a

male), gives him an animated movement along the aisle of the car, and softly dumps him—somewhere outside.

Superintendents know what effect the character of a conductor has upon the traffic of their roads. A gentleman sends his wife and family East regularly twice a year always by the same route, and by the train of which a certain conductor is in charge the greatest part of the distance, simply because, years ago, that official gained the confidence of the family by trifling acts of courtesy and consideration.

It is quite natural that travelers should entertain these preferences, and that the course of many regular travelers should be shaped accordingly.

Even our noisy and obscene passenger may have

his preference; for if he *must* be put off the cars, it would be pleasant to have the operation performed by the gentle hand that did it before.

"Well, Nellie," said I to a young lady, "how did your grandpapa and grandmamma get over the journey?"

"Oh, excellently well; the day passed quickly, and we were at our journey's end before we were prepared for it. The conductor was such a good fellow, and bore the troublesome ways of the old people kindly. When grandmamma suddenly screamed and opened her eyes in horror, every body crowded about her, and it was found she had dropped her gold snuff-box out of the car window! We were near a station, and our conductor had a man jump off and go back after it. Fancy the old lady's joy when with great satisfaction he handed it back—snuff and all! But I think grandpapa was more pleased with the kindly manner of the man than with the return of the box, though he had an odd way of showing it. He rose and said, 'Young man, what is the time by your watch?' The conductor replied, 'Five P.M.' 'Five P.M.,' said my grandpapa, impressively; 'I shall never forget it.'

"Our conductor was equal to the requirements of all. He answered a hundred questions every time he came into the car with unvarying patience and

good humor—quieted a petulant child by giving her lemon-drops, and another by showing his watch-chain and diamond shirt-studs.

"An elderly lady wanted to ask him a few questions. He sat down beside her, and said he should be pleased to tell her all he could between there and the next stopping-place.

"She asked him where *Podunk* was; if he was acquainted some in *Podunk*; whether the *Podunk* House was the best hotel; if a 'bus ran to the *Podunk* House; if she could buy some cambric handkerchiefs in *Podunk*; how much they charged a day at the *Podunk* House; did he know old Mr. Debus in *Podunk*; if he ever lived in *Podunk*; did he like *Podunk*; was *Podunk* a live place; who was the best doctor in *Podunk*; who kept the *Podunk* House; did he know any thing else about *Podunk*?

"Yes, he thought there was a man on the cars going to *Podunk*. He introduced him to the old lady as *Podunk*. '*Podunk*?' she queried. 'Yes; *Podunk*!' said he, as he took the seat vacated by the conductor.

"Wasn't he good," said Nellie, "to take so much pains for a plain-looking, ill-dressed old woman?"

"He looked after us all the time; and as grandma had not finished her fourth cup, he told me to take it into the car, and he would bring the crockery back

next trip. In fact our conductor performed kindly offices for every body, answered every body's questions, lent people papers, and made himself generally liked."

Some men who read the above may remark that it is all very well, but every conductor can not spare the time for such courtesies.

A man is never so busy that he can not be courteous and good-tempered. Business is too frequently made the excuse for rudeness. The only valid excuse for rudeness is one which few will care to plead — a selfish and brutal disposition. Kindness takes up no more time than rudeness, costs nothing, and is far better.

Men whose occupations bring them into daily contact with large numbers of their fellow-creatures, with opportunities of being of service to those in need of a cheerful word and help, are the envy of many whose isolated duties debar them from such happy chances; and surely there is a responsibility attaching to such opportunities!

A poor widow who had an only son, her chief support, called upon a railroad functionary who had discharged him on some ground that she believed had not been fully investigated. The functionary was busy making out his new tariff: he looked up savagely as she entered, and said,

"What do you want? I'm busy."

She timidly said her name was Mrs. Biggs.

"Can not listen to you," was the coarse reply; "your son has been dismissed for misconduct, and that's the end of it."

Now, if he had listened to that poor woman he would have found that she was a superior lady, on whom misfortune had been severe; that she was an object for compassion; and that the misconduct of her son had strong redeeming features.

As it was, that man's neglect of duty may probably accelerate the widow toward her grave, and her son to depravity. I say "that man's neglect of duty;" for it was as much his duty to listen to the widow's story as to construct his tariff.

A conductor should have all the human virtues, and some of the angelic ones, to please his employers, the public, and to reasonably satisfy himself.

The answering of the everlasting string of questions must be the greatest trial.

A man comes into the sleeping-car at about half-past eleven, wet, and making the car unpleasant. Everybody hates him directly he gets in—for no particular reason, except that he ought to have got in about two hours before they had settled down to sleep; and this man immediately asks the conductor to make sure and call him at Perkins's Corners. The

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"IS THIS PERKINS'S CORNERS?"

conductor makes a note of it, and the man gets into his berth.

Train stops. He cries out loudly, "Hi! conductor, is this Perkins's Corners?"

Conductor assures him he will not reach Perkins's Corners for some time yet.

At the next stopping-place, "Is this Perkins's Corners?" he asks again.

Conductor again replies, "No." And so on at twelve or thirteen other stations.

Finally conductor loses his patience, and anxiously looks for the time when they will arrive at Perkins's Corners, in order that he may waken that passenger up roughly, and shake some of the curiosity out of him.

At last Perkins's Corners is reached.

Conductor goes to the troublesome passenger, and, seizing him by the collar rather more roughly than necessary,

"Now, then, git up," he says; "this is Perkins's Corners, and I am glad of it. Git up!"

"Git up?" says the passenger. "What on airth do you want me to git up for?"

"Why, don't you want to git out at Perkins's Corners?" conductor remarks, somewhat alarmed.

"No, of course not—not by a long sight. You see, I'm taking medicine, and my wife told me she thought



Perkins's Corners would be about the right place for another pill."

A conductor should be a married man, because a married man's sympathies are keener than a single man's, and his acts more likely to be disinterested; he should be brave, for his courage is often tested; forbearing, for his patience is sorely tried; and faithful, because great trust is placed in him. He should have some practical knowledge to help him with expedients when accidents occur; a ready judgment, and nerve to act promptly in time of danger. He should see that no time is lost at stations, have a thorough understanding of his time-card, and all the rules and regulations affecting the duties of employes, an eye to the condition of the track, trestles, bridges, culverts, and embankments; he should frequently examine the breaks, couplings, and bell-ropes of his cars; inspect his train before starting, to see that the cars have been carefully cleaned, and that his passengers are comfortably accommodated; that his watch is in accordance with the railroad standard time; that all the necessary articles for emergencies are on board—flags, signal-lamps, torpedoes, links, and pins, spare bell-rope, etc., etc.; that signal-lamps are displayed at the proper time; to be on the alert for signals from the engineer, or at stations and side-tracks; to see that his passengers get out at the stations for which

they are ticketed; to report all delays and irregularities; to make accurate returns of all tickets and fares collected, and cars and passengers on his train; to treat his passengers with courtesy and consideration; to be ready and willing to afford all information to inquiries, and to meet his general superintendent *sans peur et sans reproche*.

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CHAPTER III.

THE ENGINEER.

The Engineer.—A Night Ride on the "Greyhound."—Enginemmen at their Work.—Going Shares in a Pipe.—Trying on the Mind.—The Engineer's Wife.—A Contrast.—The Incidents of a Run.—His Duties compared to the Soldier's.—How the Engineer begins.—The "Erk-yools" and her Driver.—Why Mechanical Knowledge advisable.—The nervous Engineer, and the practical Joke that was played on him.

"WILL you take a ride on the engine to-night, sir?" said John Dobbs, as the Lightning Express was just about starting East. "It's a wild, dirty night," added John, "and we shall be half an hour late before we get off—perhaps you would not care about it? All right, sir; take a trip on the 'Greyhound' another time."

It certainly would be more comfortable in the palace-car at the rear, I thought; but just then the conductor waved his lamp, and I got on the engine.

The "Greyhound" had a full head of steam on, and was blowing off at the safety-valve, making a deafening noise, and groaning with the power within her. Carefully proceeding through the yard and fast

freight-trains that would follow us, we soon left the station lights behind, and plowed into the darkness and the storm.



THE ENGINEER.

John Dobbs was one of the oldest and best men on the road. It was his boast, and an honest one, that during the sixteen years he had been driving on that road he had not cost the Company a dollar for any negligence or mistake of his. His record was clear.

I sat and watched him from the opposite side of the cab. He was rather tall, thin, and of a nervous temperament; and although not even the smoke-stack of the engine could be seen for the darkness and the drifting snow, his peering eye never wavered from its unsubstantial mark. One hand on the throttle, the other on the reversing lever, he stood erect and firm, intensely propelling his vision into the abyssmal darkness beyond.

The "Greyhound" began to feel her feet; her speed increased with every stroke of her piston heart. Her mechanism quivered with its force; she leaped and reeled on each defective joint, but her iron members held her firm. The fireman never ceased to cast in the fuel, and the fierce flames darted ardently through her brassy veins.

Suddenly a scream from the whistle, a quick movement on the throttle—the fireman rushed to the other side of the engine—a flash of light! We passed a station and a freight train in the side-track.

More fuel into the fire, and the "Greyhound" urged ahead, for now we had a straight piece of track before us.

The storm abated, and the sky cleared.

The fireman produced from his pocket a small cutty pipe, loaded it with tobacco, lighted it with a puff or two, and without saying a word stuck it be-

tween John's teeth. John had taken about twenty rapid whiffs, when the fireman, as unceremoniously as before, transferred it to himself, and with a few fierce draws consumed the load—a very unpolite proceeding, but apparently part of the discipline of the engine.

Those few "draws" did both men good. Johnnie's grasp tightened on the throttle, and the fireman with new energy threw in the wood.

We passed a few more stations and freight trains in side-tracks, and at tremendous speed bounded from the level down a grade, the steepest on the road. Steam was shut off, the fireman seized the brake-wheel, the whistle screamed for brakes, and we finally came to a stand right under the hose of a water-tank.

"Engine-driving is trying work such weather as to-night's, sir," said Johnny, wiping the perspiration off his face with his sleeve, "when you can't see the signal lights, nor even your smoke-stack; and you have to run like mad on bad track to make up time so as not to lose connection; I tell you it makes a man sweat, if he's as cold as a lump of ice.

"You have to go it blind; you can't see if the switches are right, if trains you are to pass have got into the side-track; you can't make out any thing until you are right on to it.

"It's trying work on the mind, sir, is driving an engine.

"Such as us get very little sleep. The other night, now, my wife started up in bed and screamed as if she was being murdered. 'What are you doing?' she cried; and bless your life! sir, there was I, pulling her slender arm with all my might, while my foot was steadied against—something else, trying to 'reverse.'"

Over this dream at his wife's expense John D. laughed heartily; and as the tank was now filled with water, and a fresh supply of wood thrown in the tender, I wished him good-night, preferring to complete my journey in the palace-car at the rear.

How little, if at all, did the two hundred passengers upon the train—most of them comfortably lying in their sleeping-berths—trouble themselves about the anxieties of the man on the engine who had their lives in charge!

Sheltered from the rough weather, and warm and snug, they never bestowed a thought on his piercing eyes and his face beaten by the storm as he leaned out of the cab, trying in vain to "make out" through the whirling snow some signs of things ahead.

And why should they trouble themselves? A man with a good record for sixteen years had them

in charge; one who keenly felt the extent of his responsibility, and would do his duty well, even if in discharging it he must needs come face to face with death.

The trials of an engineer are sometimes almost too much for human endurance. When, before starting on a trip which he expects to be a pleasant one—the day is clear, all bodes well for his “connections” to be secured—he feels in good humor, and can afford to joke occasionally with his fireman, the signal is given, and away he starts. He presently begins to smell something; looks round, and finds trailing from one of the truck-boxes a black cloud of smoke. This has probably been caused by dirt getting accidentally into the truck-box when standing in the running shed.

Or, perhaps directly after he has got well out of the station-yard, he slips an eccentric-rod, hard to get at.

However, all these mishaps are overcome by ingenuity and patience; and they seem to be very trifling annoyances when looked back upon from the side of his comfortable fire, surrounded by his wife and family, and smoking the pipe of peace after the day's toil is over.

Still there are few men in the world whose lines are cast in harder places than those of the loco-

tive engineer, and certainly to none, except the houseless tramp, does the winter bring more bitter or more painful trials. Without making any mention of the cold to which they are at all hours exposed, or the miseries they endure while attempting to force a lane through heavy drifts of snow, and the other rigorous inclemencies which in their duty it devolves upon them to suffer, let us glance at the ordinary risk which they run in winter above all others.

The engineer, in the season when tracks are blocked with snow and covered with ice, is no better off, as far as personal security is concerned, than the man who exposes himself in battle.

When the soldier goes to the field, and takes leave of his family, they have a remote chance of seeing him again; to kill or to be killed is his profession.

But the locomotive engineer is a man of peace; his employment is one of the triumphs of modern mechanical science. It is not taken into account that he stands chances of being smothered, scalded, or jammed to death, or of being carried home in the auxiliary car smashed to within an inch of eternity. In fact no one that has not experienced it can fully realize what is required of the engineer by his superintendent, other railroad officials, and the traveling public.

His hours of duty are painfully long, accompanied

by the most trying privations. His nervous system is perpetually on the strain, and if he allows his attention to be withdrawn for a moment from his duty—either by a thought of his family or other personal affairs (the claims of his stomach, for instance)—that very moment the whole of the precious human freight behind him may be cast into wreck and death.

I once asked a man if he would like to be an engineer. He replied "No;" he "would rather stop at home, and have a quiet smoke."

It is estimated that there are seventy-six thousand miles of railroad in operation in the United States and Canada.

There must, therefore, be many thousands of engineers, and of course a corresponding number of firemen.

How such numbers of these men are trained, and how their ranks are supplied as they are depleted by accident, old age, and death, is a puzzle which is rather difficult to solve, especially when we reflect upon the hazard and general thanklessness of the duty.

The engineer commences his career as a wiper in the boiler-shed. In course of time he becomes a fireman on a switching-engine. Then he has charge of the engine of a "Mixed." Next he runs an "Accommodation;" or perhaps it may be his chance to

stay for some little time on a "Tri-weekly;" and at last he reaches the acme of his profession on the "Lightning Express," where time must be made up at all hazards, and connections secured, if he wants to keep his engine.

Then he shows what stuff he is made of.

Many of the dangers which beset an engineer arise from causes over which he can exercise no control whatever; and the performance of their duties by bridge repairers, trackmen, signalmen, switchmen, and numerous other employés, not to speak of train dispatchers, are all elements of risk. A displaced rail, a switch turned wrong, a switch-rail a little bit out of gauge, a defective bridge, a crumbling culvert, or an embankment weakened by rain or frost—these are what the engineer has to look out for, and in the natural course of events to expect; and they go to make up the risk of his occupation.

The engineer's attachment to his engine is great.

It is only a short time since I heard one extol the merits of the "Venus."

The language he used in describing her endowments would have flattered many a lady. And when he was divorced from "Venus," and had to strike up a platonic affection for a machine he called the "Erk-yools," his disgust could not be expressed in words.

This same engineer, soon after he got the "Erk-yools," had an accident.

Quite forgetting that his orders read he was to leave the yard and go west on the arrival of No. —, going east, he started before that train arrived; and, as he graphically described it, the first he knew about the train coming east was when he found himself sitting on the top of the telegraph office rubbing a sore place, with a fine view of the "Erk-yools" apparently foiled in the attempt to jump on the "Taurus."

It was a mercy he was not killed, he said. How he got on top of the telegraph office he never found out.

If his fireman had been thrown there too, it would have been better. The accident proved fatal to him.

On another occasion this same engineer, whose *physique* seemed to be very volatile, after the concussion arising from running his machine into another train, found himself sitting on the top of a freight-car three car-lengths away from his engine, rubbing a sore place as before.

A good deal has been said about the necessity of engineers being mechanics. All that is required of an engineer is to know enough about the construction of his engine to be ready with expedients when parts of the motion give out and simple fractures in the gearing occur.

Some men, not knowing how to handle tools, or to contrive such expedients as are necessary in case of a breakdown, have caused their railroad companies great expense, and the traveling public very much inconvenience.

I was on a train which was delayed six or eight hours because the engineer did not know enough to make some trifling adjustment, and another engine had to be brought to our relief. When it came, its better qualified engineer saw what was the matter, put it right in about five minutes, and away we went—all thinking with one accord that no superintendent should keep such a so-called engineer in his employ.

An engineer once confessed to me that he knew no more than a child about how the steam got in and out of the cylinders. He said, "It seemed to push mighty hard somehow," and that was all he knew about it. But this man was born under a lucky star, and had a good knowledge of the road on which he was running; a daring fellow, too, and one that would make up time; and the consequence was that, with the rather unpleasant pseudonym of "Hell-fire Jack," he was a great favorite with the general superintendent.

But a little knowledge of mechanics, and a perfect knowledge of the running gear of his engine, are indispensable to an engineer; and no man should be

allowed to step upon the foot-board who has not been put to test in this respect by a preliminary examination.

No one who has not been on an engine at such a time can understand the sickening feeling of running over a man on the track. Every instinct seems to revolt against so suddenly ending the career of a fellow-creature.

THE NERVOUS ENGINEER.

It is not very long ago that the incident I am about to relate occurred on a railroad in the East.

An engineer, very nervous about running over people, and unusually careful in that respect, was alarmed at seeing a man standing in the middle of the track, apparently transfixed with fear—his arms extended, as if giving the signal to stop, yet never attempting to move out of the way.

The engineer whistled "on brakes," and reversed his engine. Having done nearly all he could do, he crept out toward the cow-catcher, hoping he might in some way avert the threatened calamity.

Still the engine kept thundering along, getting closer and closer, until at last the pale face of the man on the track, and his eyes in unnatural fixity, could be seen.

The engineer gave one long shout of warning, and

a moment afterward the man was dashed into a million of atoms; for it turned out to be a snow man, which some mischievous persons had placed on the track; and they had gas-tarred him all over, except his face, in order the better to deceive the engineer.

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CHAPTER IV.

MORE ABOUT THE ENGINEER. — JUMPING THE GAP.

More about the Engineer.—Tom Potts's Tale.—The "Witch."—
Jumping the Gap.—The Story of Little Johnnie, and his sad Fate.
—The Engineer's Story; "Foul Play with the Lamp."—The
Ghost on the Cow-catcher.—A dreadful Scare.—Diagnosis of a
sickly Engine, by I. Throttlevalve.

TOM POTTS, a well-known locomotive engineer in England and the States, is the self-accredited hero of the following wonderful story of successful daring. I will narrate it as nearly as I can in his own words. I have heard him tell it often.

"Well, gentlemen, I'll say you'll think it's a lie, but I can't help that; you have asked me to tell it; and all I can say is if you'd been in my place you'd have seen it.

"I had been driving the 'Witch' for about seven months, and a sweet thing she was. I never was half as fond of an engine as I was of her. She was the kind of machine a man only gets once in a lifetime.

"She made her steam quick, was easy on fuel, started off lively, and went like a deer. Her cylinders were sixteen-inch, her stroke twenty-two; and

her drivers seven feet six; and she was as kind to handle as a baby.

"To see her run off with a heavy load, light and gay, was enough to shame the 'Juno,' 'Venus,' and 'Helen,' and other eighteen-inch machines.

"She never wanted fixing up. 'Venus' was always going in and out of the shop to be titivated, and if there's any thing I don't like, it's an engine that all the time wants to be titivated. She was always ready and willing for work. Why, bless you! she was only washed out for the sake of cleanliness—she didn't *need* it a bit.

"She was the tidiest thing I ever see—seemed as though dirt wouldn't stick to her.

"Well, what I'm going to tell came off years ago, before I left the Old Country, and it was on one of the best of railroads—single track then, though it's got three now, and four in some spots.

"Well, the 'Witch' and I were put on the mail—one of the fastest trains; and they went like sixty in them days.

"The engineer was fined a shilling for every minute he lost. He durst not go slow for fog unless he wanted to lose his day's pay. He had to keep going right along, and see things before he got in sight of 'em.

"We were running north one darkish wintry day,

and were making our best streaks. I should reckon we were going about fifty miles an hour.

"I was saying to myself, 'she's going her prettiest,' when we suddenly shot ahead as if we had been fired out of a cannon.

"I knew what that meant; we had broke loose, we hadn't a car behind us. The coupling had broken between tender and first coach.

"How we flew, to be sure! I whistled the guard to brake up the train. How we bounded along!

"I could make out no objects alongside—we seemed to get faster and faster; we must have got *as fast as one hundred miles an hour*.

"It was a straight piece of track for some miles. I did not shut off steam directly we broke, for I didn't want that train to run into us, which might happen if they did not hear me whistle for brakes.

"It was lucky I kept her going; for just as I had had about enough of such flying a man started out about six hundred yards before us holding a red flag.

"There was nothing in the way, so I knew something must be wrong with the track.

"You might as well have tried to stop a whirlwind as the 'Witch' in that distance. Her speed was frightful.

"There wasn't much time to think, and, as we

could not stop, the faster we went the better; so I gave her what more steam there was. She seemed to have some 'go' in reserve, for we shot past the red flag like a flash.

"I saw men standing horror-struck.

"'Bill,' I said, 'quick! Get on the coke, and see what's ahead.'

"He looked, and went deadly pale, tottered, and fell back in a faint.

"By this time I could see plain enough what was wrong.

"There was a gap in the track where a bridge had gone down!

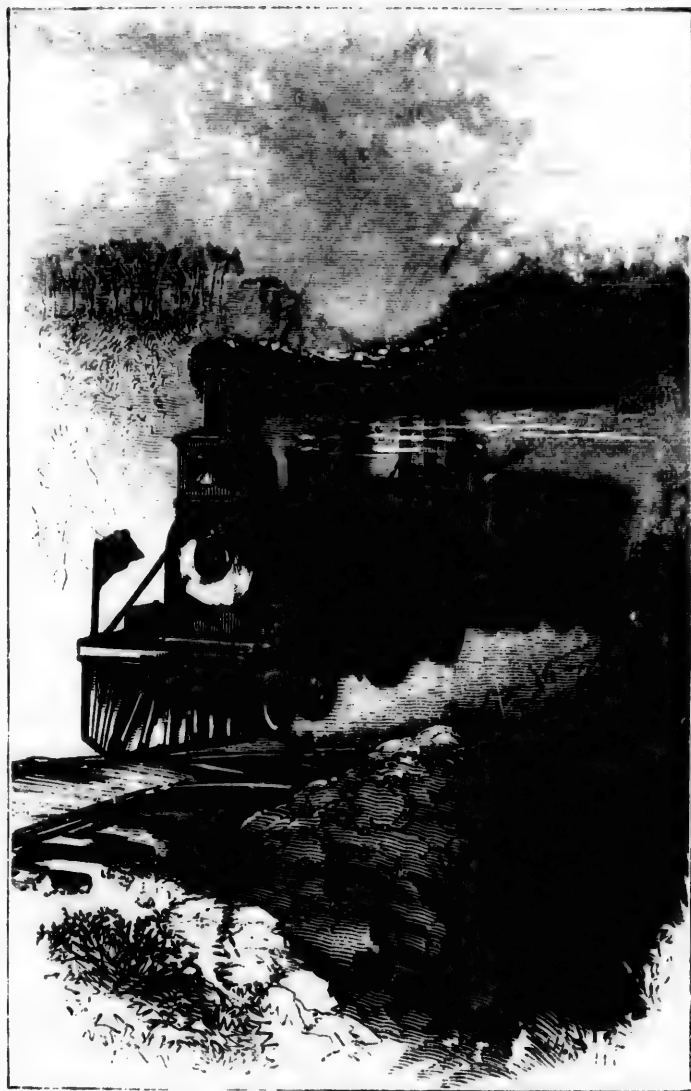
"You can't fancy my feelings just then. Going to death—death, swift and terrible—at about two miles a minute—getting nearer, nearer! I thought of my wife and child—nearer! An instant more—the gap!

"'God have mercy!' I shrieked.

"Well, would you believe it? that engine just cleared that gap!

"It was fifteen feet across, and about sixty feet deep.

"She jumped that gap like a stag, and what's more, she struck the rails all right on the other side, and kept right along just as if she had not noticed the gap!



"SHE JUMPED THE GAP LIKE A STAG."

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"I stirred Bill up, and with both of us at the brake we managed at last to stop the 'Witch.'

"She was on a tear that day, but I never dreamed she'd jump the gap—that's a fact."

LITTLE JOHNNY.

"It seemed wrong to call him an idiot—such a sweet young lad; but that was the name he went by in this little settlement of Fork's Hollow when he was alive, poor fellow!

"His mother was the widow of an old engineer, and she gave birth to him after her husband had been killed in an accident on the road.

"It was a pretty sight, in happier times, to see her coming to the dépôt every night when John Hoops went by with his train, just to catch a glimpse of her husband's face; and John was always on the lookout for his wife.

"But it was enough to make a stout heart sad, when, after his death, this poor young creature still continued her journeys to the dépôt, standing there until the train John used to drive went by.

"'He is coming,' she used to say to me, looking almost as she used to do before his death. 'He is coming—I can hear his whistle round the curve.'

"But when the engine came shooting past, and the beloved face was not seen on the engine, she would

throw her hands up in a mad kind of way, and go home.

"She did not seem to realize that her husband was really dead until the child was born.

"She got her senses again then, but the poor boy never had all his.

"You see there is a sort of brotherhood among railroad people; and when John Hoops was killed we subscribed what we could, and the railroad gave her something, and what with the work of her own hands and the little help she got from her friends she and little Johnny managed to get along nicely.

"Johnny from his earliest days seemed fascinated by the railroad; and when he got to be about fifteen, before he was half my size—I have been at this station pretty nigh twenty years, sir—nothing pleased him more than to swing a lamp or wave a flag when it was necessary to stop a train, ours being a flag-station, at which no trains stop unless there is somebody to get off or get on.

"It was soon a regular thing, as Johnny grew up, when the whistle of an approaching train was heard at the curve, for him to rush from his mother's side and, if necessary, stop the train.

"All the engineers knew him, and used to like to talk with him, asking after the widow of their old friend, and such like pleasant talk.



LITTLE JOHNNY AND HIS WIDOWED MOTHER.

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"Most engineers like to get past a flag station if they can without stopping, but all of them liked to stop at Fork's Hollow, just for the sake of seeing and talking with that poor boy.

"This went on for several years, Johnny's interest in stopping the trains being still all-absorbing.

"He never appeared to think of any thing else.

"He was always happy when he was doing it, and sad when he was not.

"Well, it happened about two years ago that in the middle of the night, as I lay in bed, I thought I heard the whistle of an engine at the road-crossing. I immediately forgot all about it, but soon heard the noise of a train passing the dépôt, a special—rather an unusual thing on our branch; but as it had gone by, I went to sleep.

"In the morning, on the platform, there lay little Johnny, dead!

"He could have had no lamp; and why should he have tried to stop the special?

"You see those marks on the side of the freight-shed?

"That's where his body was thrown by the engine, and where you are sitting I found him.

"His poor mother died just after his corpse was taken home, and we buried them both together.

"A sad story, sir.

"There's a whistle at the crossing, and here comes your train.

"I must signal her to stop; but whenever I do so, I can't help thinking of little Johnny."

FOUL PLAY WITH THE LAMP.

An engineer who had neglected to display his red lamp flagging-signal, and being reminded of the omission when approaching the train against which he was bearing the flag, attempted to prevent the inevitable collision by a mode not in the rules, made the following singular statement to the General Superintendent:

"You see, when we got the order I went to the front of the engine, to help my fireman to fasten on the lamp. The iron strap had got bent, and would not go into the slot made to hold it. So we tied it on with a piece of rope. It delayed us about a minute fixing that."

"Was it lighted?"

"Yes, sir. After taking so much trouble to fix a lamp on, we should not be so green as to go away without having a light in it.

"Well, we were a little bit behind time, and had not much to spare to save the connection. I was keeping a sharp lookout ahead, and we were getting along pretty fast.

"It was not a clear night, and it was not a thick night; I had a good view of things ahead.

"Well, sir, you may think I've lost my senses, but I tell you solemnly that I saw a woman, or a woman's ghost, walking straight up the middle of the track toward my engine!

"It was no use whistling, she was so close. I crawled out of the cab-window as quick as I could, and went along toward the front just in time to see the form sitting in the buffer-beam, and putting out the light in the red lamp.

"The creature got off when it saw me, and walked away in front of the engine; and as we thundered along after it, it somehow disappeared.

"I got back into the cab, trembling some.

"I told John the lamp was out, and to go and get it and light it.

"After he had done it, we went out and tied it on.

"I went to see if it was burning all right, and it was burning bright.

"I said nothing to Jack about what I had seen.

"Well, it was more than three minutes, and we were going our smartest, when I saw that same figure walking up the track toward the engine as before.

" 'Jack,' I cried, 'look there!'

"Jack had already seen it, and had sounded a long whistle, and begun to put on the brake.

" 'Go to the cow-catcher,' I said; and he crawled through the window.

"A few moments after he came back, his face pale, and his eyes starting out of his head. He looked at me, and I looked at him, but we said nothing.

"I pointed ahead, and there it was!

"I got out and fetched in the lamp.

"The light was out!

" 'I saw it open the lamp-door and blow it out,' said Jack, in an awful terror; 'and then it got down and walked away in front of the engine.'

"Well, I guess there never was two men on an engine so mortally scared as my fireman and me.

"However, I went out again with the lamp and tied it on. I also turned the rope once or twice round the door, so it could not be opened without some trouble.

" 'Jack,' I said, when I got back into the cab, 'there's going to be some dreadful thing happen to-night. That woman's a ghost of evil. No living being could do as that has done.'

"Jack's teeth were chattering with fright, and so were mine, for the matter of that.

"I felt we had been singled out to be the cause or the victims of something awful.

" 'Keep a good lookout, Jack,' I said; 'we're only a mile from G——, where we are flagging No. 174 to, and we must show the light if all the she-devils in hell are agin' us.'

"I ordered Jack to the front of the engine to watch the lamp.

"He did not seem to like it, but he went.

"I wrote on the back of a time-card these words :

"'FOR GOD'S SAKE, DON'T PASS THE SWITCH. We are flagging No. 174.'

"I stuck the paper on the end of a bit of pine wood, and kept it ready.

"When I looked ahead again, I saw the shape, as plain as I see you now, sir, walking toward us, and afterward get on the front of the engine.

"I could see the head-light of No. 135 in the side-track, and I was sure our flagging signal-lamp was out, for there was that female figure walking ahead of us on the track for the third time.

"I wasn't so scared as before, so I just lighted the pine stick in the fire-box, and held it up flaming bright with the paper on it.

"As I passed the engine of No. 135 I threw it toward the engineer.

"It was getting dark, but by the engine light I saw him pick it up.

"He read the paper, as you know, sir, and waited till No. 174 had got in ; and so there was no collision.

"My story may seem strange, but it's true, as Heaven is my judge.

"You may discharge me and Jack, if you like, for not showing the flag signal, as you say ; but I can't alter what I've said.

"When we got to the end of the trip, I found Jack had fainted away, and was lying senseless on the front of the engine; for that she-devil had put the lamp out somehow, in spite of him and the rope I tied round the door."

THE ENGINEER'S DIAGNOSIS.

An engineer once sent in the following diagnosis of the complaints of his engine, "Juno:"

"DEER SIR,—Her bilers want purgin bad she dont make her steam cheerful sum of her jintis is stiff sum loose her moshun aint reglar as it was 15 year ago she wonts a noo bonet on smok stak her big and little ends wonts looking 2, her bufer beem is shakey her pump lieks bad and her tender dont hold her liquids her smok stak sits loos, you out to pak up her pistens her cowketcher is rotten it wont hold a caf on it she kant drop her sand shese heavey on grees her left hand steem chist kivver is busted off her valves are weezy she rattles like a bag of hammers her bell is krakt, pit cocks wont squert water free and shese finally used up. ef you wont me to drive her you've got to get her to hold sum steem jist now she kant make enuff to wistle with. but she'll make a heap of scrap iron. Yours trewly

"JACOB THROTTLEVALVE."

CHAPTER V.

JIM RILEY'S "DORG."

The Engineer's "Dorg."—Life at D——.—How Jim Riley became acquainted with the "Dorg."—Salvation gets some Ideas.—A volunteer Lookout.—Dead at his Post.—Recollections of a Friend.—A Miner's "Dorg."

It is some years since that well-known engineer, Jim Riley, told me about his "dorg." Jim Riley is dead now; he died at his post, like a man—his hand on the throttle, and his look ahead.

The "dorg" soon after crossed the Styx. If he did not follow his beloved master, he no doubt went to the place where the good dogs do go.

I can not relate Jim Riley's exact words, but they were something as follows:

"He's a sort of long-backed mongrel hound. I call the way I come by that sweet animile kinder sing'lar.

"It was a time ago, when I was runnin' on the P. and A. Line, out West; and, what's kinder curious, it warn't Jim Riley as got the dorg, but the dorg as got Jim Riley.

"It happened thusly.

"D—— was the west end of the P. and A. Road ; and D—— was the hardest spot on this airth just then. The citizens drawed their shootin'-irons quite frequent, and made holes in their bodies.

"If you wanted a hole made, you only had to accidentally spit on a man.

"It was a live place. But it wasn't a faster place for livin' than dyin'.

"Women and children died nat'ral out thar, but all proper citizens died vi'lent.

"Well, one mornin', while busy wipin' up the 'Perhairie Flower'—that was my engine—I heerd a consid'able kind of janglin', and rayther more shootin' than ornery at that time o' day.

"It was about 7 o'clock A.M.; my card-time to leave was 7.05.

"I nat'lly looked out to see the shootin'.

"About fifteen citizens were slodgin' up the track straight for me and my engine, and occasionally shootin'.

"One shot landed on my smoke-stack, another on the cab winder, soundin' like a cheerful musketer agin' my ear.

"Some more arrived, permisc'us.

"What in thunder were they shootin' at? That's what I wanted to know. Was it Jim Riley?

"Just then I noticed what they were after—a lit-

tle dorg runnin' up the track, and that dorg was comin' straight for the 'Perhairie Flower.'

"The citizens hadn't had no shootin' quite a spell, so they reely enjoyed that dorg.

"He carried one fore leg, and sometimes one hind leg; and when he fell down and howled the citizens drawed on him, and were havin' a reely nice O be joyful time.

"They enjoyed that dorg.

"But that dorg managed to climb up the cow-catcher and on to the 'Perhairie Flower.' How he did it is a mystery, but he did. He walked along the framin' and crawled along into the cab winder.

"I just looked at him, and he looked at me, quite wistful.

"You see I was layin' low, so as to miss lead; but when I looked on him, and he gazed on me, why, bust me, if I didn't feel 'most as if he was my own child!

"The lid of the box on the fireman's side was open; and that dorg just looked at that box as if to say, 'Jim Riley, s'pose this poor, broken-legged dorg gets in there, and you shet down the lid?'

"'Get in quick,' says I, 'and save your poor life from them exuberated citizens.'

"He slid in; and I warn't long droppin' the lid.

"As I done so the citizens got quite near. How-

ever, I had time to pick up about four pound of dirty cotton-waste, and pitch it into the fire-hole just as one on 'em stepped on the foot-plate.

"'Whar's the dorg?' says he.

"'Whar's the mongrel?' says they, as they clambered on the 'Perhairie Flower.'

"I p'inted solemn into the fire-hole; and they crowded round to look at that dorg frizzlin'!

"You oughter seen their disapp'intment. They said it was a derned shame to burn a live dorg.

"'You're a devil, Jim Riley,' says they, 'to throw that dorg into them flames!'

"You see, they wanted to shoot him some more, and nat'lly didn't like bein' disapp'inted.

"They looked at me with horror—them virtuous citizens—and walked away from Jim Riley; Jim Riley was too much of a devil!

"A minute afterward, the 'Perhairie Flower' was making her usual streaks on the plains.

"I thought I'd examine the dorg.

"He was layin' cryin' in the box, and he had a right to. He had one fore and one hind foot smashed, his hide was likewise peeled off here and there; he also had a jaw broke.

"Poor critter!

"Me and my fireman washed his wounds with warm water out of the b'iler, and bandaged 'em. He

lay in the box day and night, and never moved except when I spoke to him. He'd just raise his head and gaze on me then, seemin' to say, 'Jim Riley, you've acted like a man toward a persecuted dorg, and as long as I live I'll never forget it.'

"The boys in the runnin' shed treated him kind. In a few weeks his feet got better, and he was soon O.K.

"But he wouldn't leave the engine, and it's reelly surprisin' how that dorg loved me!

"He sot on the box and watched my doin's; and every time I took my hand off the throttle he'd come and lick it.

"He was wonderful attentive to every thin' doin' on the 'Perhairie Flower.' He sot and studied. Any critter as sits watchin' and studyin' for weeks as he did must get some idees; but that dorg got a heap.

"He seemed quite happy, except when we got near D——; and then he'd try to open the box. I always opened it, and he got in.

"I was glad when the 'Perhairie Flower' was put on a run on the east end, so we never went near D—— after; but that dorg was consid'ble gladder than me.

"I said he'd got some idees. Well, one day my fireman, who was kinder thoughtless, did not pull the bell-rope at a crossin' whar he should. That dorg

noticed it, and gettin' on his rear he took the rope in his teeth and sounded that bell! Yes, he did, just as true as Gospel. But that ain't a patch on what he does now.

"I thought he'd orter have a name, so I suggested 'D——,' after the name of the city whar he was persecooted; but he shivered at it.

"I let that slide, and mentioned 'Salvation,' in allusion to his rescue. He wagged his tail, as though 'Salvation' was a joyful sound, and barked; so I concluded to call him that.

"It was shortened to 'Sal' at last, which, bein' a female word, didn't describe his state.

"The P. and A. Road, whar we run now, is curvy; but 'Salvation' always goes and sits on the buffer-beam, keepin' a lookout ahead.

"The wind sometimes is enough to blow the skin off him, but thar he sits; and if any thin' is ahead he runs in at the cab winder barkin'!

"He can see farther than me. Yes, he can. I never busted a steam-chist kivver since 'Salvation' sot in front, 'cause I never had to suddenly throw back the 'Perhairie Flower.'

"'Salvation' always barks in time.

"Yes; thar he sits at the front. He don't care for rain, wind, or cold; they can't drive him in the cab. Thar he sits in storm and darkness, doin' his dooty.

"I'd like to see the switch-lights, he don't; it would improve my eye-sight consid'ble.

"If a train is on the main track when we get near a dépôt yard, he barks till it's clear.

"'Salvation's' bark 's better'n all my tootin's.

"He gen'ally rings the bell goin' through yards, and keeps a good lookout at the cab winder. He jumps off and on at switches, and would set 'em hisself if he could; yes, he would. And, would you believe it, he barks once for 'brakes,' twice for 'off brakes,' and three times for 'back up.'"

This was Jim Riley's story of "Salvation." He ran the "Perhairie Flower" for many years afterward. He and his faithful dog were inseparable.

When Jim Riley was killed—a broken rail throwing the engine on its side and crushing him—with what sad distress did his poor friend "Salvation" howl over his body, licking his livid face, and refusing to be comforted!

He followed his master to the grave, and a few days afterward was found lying on the buffer-beam of the "Perhairie Flower," *dead at his post.*

THE MINER'S "DORG."

When Jim Riley had done talking about "Salvation" one night to some men hanging round the bar of the "Settler's Saloon," a stranger, who had been

an attentive listener, and to whose clothes the yellow dirt of the mines still clung fresh, attracted notice by going straight up to Jim Riley, remarking, as he took Jim's hand,

"Pard, that dorg o' yourn's is a dorg; but if my beest warn't dead, he'd chaw his head off!



THE MINER.

"That animile o' yourn's a engineer—mine was a miner; and I tell you, Jints, he had his p'int.

"He had a sad accident, an' my pards nearly bust-ed with grief when he went under.

"I tell yer he'd a chawed 'Salvation's' blarsted head off if he'd bin alive. He was a comfort to me in sorrer.

"I made some po'try on him, which are as fol-lers:

"Yer never knowed that dorg, pard?
 Why, sho! come cheese it, Jim;
 'Thar ain't a cuss in Devil's Fork,
 As disremembers him.
 Yer see, 'bout then *she* passed her checks
 To be a angel, pard;
 An' if He ha'dn't sent that purp,
 It might ha' gripped me hard.



THE DORG.

"Yer never knowed that dorg, Jim!
 A sorter yaller hound—
 I called him 'Gouge;' he warn't no slouch.
 When fightin' war around.
 He di'n't take long to peel his teeth
 An' make consid'ble litter;
 The way he wrestled, bit, and clawed,
 Improved a human critter.

"Neow, purty soon thar warn't no dorg
Abeout that claim but him;
An' though he couldn't cuss an' drink,
We doted on him, Jim.
But arter that he lay and moaned—
It busted me right up;
Says I, 'that beast must have a muss,
Or he's a dog-goned purp!'



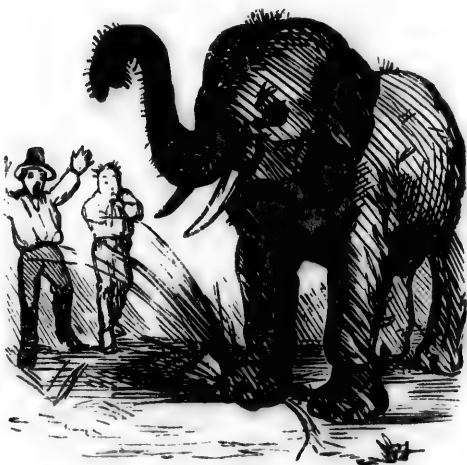
THE MUSS.

"'My pards,' says I, 'I quit the ranch;
'Gouge' sickens at the Fork;'
Yer ought ter heerd my pardners weep—
They doted on that dorg.
He had a accident, did 'Gouge'—
Yer never knowed him, Jim?
Sho! I feel a kinder chokin',
A-thinkin' abeout him.



THE PARTNERS WEeping.

"He seed a circus elephant
A hobblin' round about,
An', when the cuss warn't lookin',
He grabbed him by the snout,



THE ACCIDENT.

That clumsy critter put his foot
Too suddint on the greound,
An' spread that dorg like punkin-sass,
On twelve squar yards areound.
(He never spoke agin.)



THE REMAINS.

"Yer oughter knowed that dorg, Jim!
I've played my hand, that's clar;
He filled *her* place down here, pard;
I'll jine 'em both up thar!"

CHAPTER VI.

THE FIREMAN.

The Fireman.—How he begins.—Wiping the Engines in Shed.—Remarks on the Firing.—Facing Death for Duty.—The Fireman's Story.—A Smash.—The Yardsman.—How Trains are made up.—The Yardsman's Story.—A narrow Escape.—Detonators.—A new Style of Signaling.—The automatic Bell.

“‘WHAT did I do when I started?’”

“Well, the first thing was to wipe engines after their day's run. They have to be wiped and rubbed down, you see, after every run, just as if they was hosses; and mighty unpleasant sort o' work it is, until you get used to it.

“You see, a engine don't cool down right off when she comes in, and it's pretty hot work handlin' machinery jist after a hundred-mile run, and the steam only jist let out of her boiler. Then, shed foremen don't let a wiper wait round till she's cooled down comfortable.

“It's a greasy, cramped kind of business, is wipin'; and I was glad, I can tell you, when I got charge of a gang of wipers—I might say a 'generation of wipers.'

“Soon after that, they gave me a job as fireman

on a switchin'-engine in the yard here. I worked at that for a spell, and then got to be a regular fireman on a freight-engine.

"P'raps I might have been lucky enough to be a engineer on a yard-engine in time; but as I didn't see any chance of it just then, I concluded to take first opportunity to fire on a passenger-engine; and here I am.

"I've fired on this engine for nigh a year. Before that I was on the 'Juno,' the first passenger-engine as I fired on.

"Firin' an't such bad sort of work. You've got to work hard, that's a fact. What with chuckin' cord-wood most of the time the engine is runnin', and helpin' wood up at woodin' dépôts, not to speak of tendin' tanks, oilin', and jumpin' off every now and then to turn a switch or couple-up cars, a fireman has his hands about full enough.

"'Tryin' for the health?' Wa'al, I can't say as it's so much worse than other jobs. Of course, if you've a weak chest, or an't got a good constitution, the work will very soon spile you; but if you're pretty strong and healthy, exposure to the weather don't do you much harm.

"It an't pleasant, though, in the cold weather. I've known as many as thirty or forty of our firemen and engineers at a time laid up with frost-bites, and not

able to stand on their feet for weeks together, let alone doin' any work on a engine.

"'Dangerous, though, an't it?' Well, people often fancies as there's more danger about our work than there is. If you was to go into figures, I dare say you wouldn't find as a fireman runs any worse chance than a workman in a shop or a sailor on board ship.

"But, talkin' about danger, there's one thing to be said, though you'll p'raps hardly believe it, but it is quite true, and that is, that many a engineer or fireman has gone and faced death merely for duty.

"There's more than one pitch-in as I could tell you of when engineers had time to jump, if they'd wanted to; but they stuck to their engines, and met death instead of leavin' their duty.

"It an't as dangerous a thing as you'd fancy for a man to jump off a engine, even if she's runnin' twenty or twenty-five miles an hour, if he knows the way to do it.

"When a engineer or fireman sticks to his engine, and knows a collision must come off in a few seconds, he does it from a sense of duty—not because he don't know that he'd have a better chance of savin' his life if he jumped.

"The first engineer of a passenger-train as ever I ran mates with was killed just in that way.



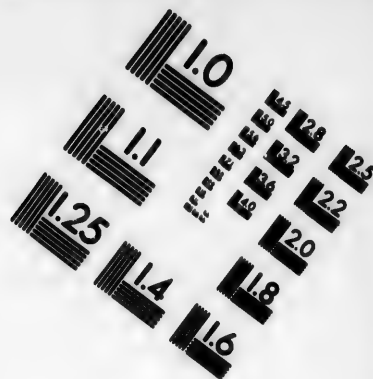
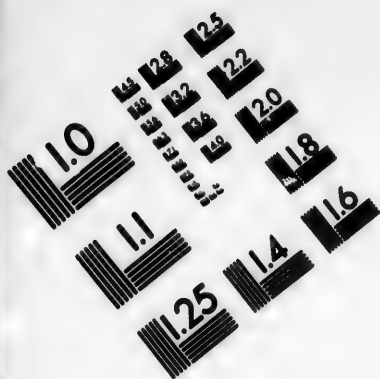
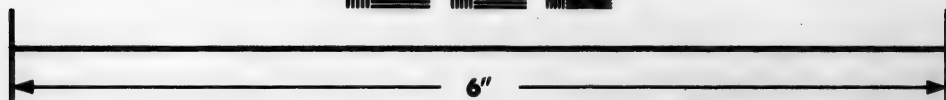
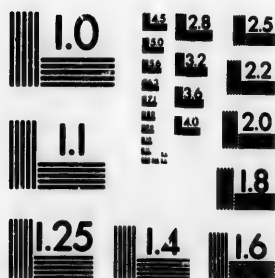


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THE FIREMAN'S STORY.

"There was a long grade on one part of the road. We used to spin down it at a high old swing, 'specially when there was time to be made up; and jist at the foot of the grade was a curve off to the left.

"One day we come rattlin' down the grade at top speed, for we were nigh twenty minutes behind time.

"Just as we got on to the curve we sighted a lot of cars right in front: they had broken loose from a special freight.

"We must have been goin' forty miles an hour, and there was these cars only two or three hundred yards ahead!

"I don't know how I looked, but I saw my mate turn pale and clench his teeth. He didn't lose his nerve. In a instant he had reversed, and next moment he was over to my side, lendin' a hand with the brake.

" 'Stick to her,' he said; 'remember, we've passengers! God help 'em!'

"We gave a last swing at the brake. 'Say your prayers, mate;' and right after there was the crash.

"When I came to myself, I was lyin' on top of a bank fifty feet from the track.

"I must have fell soft, for no bones were broke,

and in a minute or two I was able to stagger down after my mate.

"There they were, jist bringin' him out from under the tender. His poor face had a corpse-like look which told me he was goin'.

"When we collided, the tender and two next cars telescoped and mounted the engine; and when Bill was found there was the sill of a baggage-car layin' across his chest, crushing in his ribs.

"He jist looked up at me. 'It's all over with me, George,' he whispered; 'but you'll tell 'em I stuck to her to the last.' And in another moment it was all over.

"Still, it an't such a bad sort of job, an't firin'. You see, he's always on the travel, and sees a good deal of life; and then he gets as good wages as most kind of men on a railroad. If he attends to his duties, and don't go to drink, he's pretty sure to be a engineer some day, as I hope to be soon."

I do not think it necessary to apologize for introducing the following graphic description of a night-ride on an English railroad:

ON AN ENGINE.

"'Many things,' sang the greatest of Greek poets, 'are ingenious; but there is nothing more ingen-

ious than man.' Had the poet, however—may his shade forgive the anti-climax—been able to exchange his sunny Athens for our land of fogs, and, anticipating two thousand years, have found himself by my side on the engine of the express, he would probably have discerned a point in his remark which he never suspected when he made it. Man has achieved greater attainments now than taming the 'proud-necked horse,' and steering under the waves that roar around him; and one feels a sort of regret that the poet who could so proudly appreciate and so eloquently celebrate those rudiments of the future triumphs of his race was never permitted to see them in the plenitude of their glory—to behold them as we behold them now. I never fully realized the awful power of man—the sublimity of the might he wields—till I took my place on the engine of an express-train. A train at night is a spectacle of terrible magnificence anywhere, but we have become so familiarized with it that it has lost its force, and we simply regard it in the ordinary realistic light in which we look on any other casual object. We can stand unmoved on a railway, see the iron mass that whirls a helpless freight of our fellow-creatures sixty miles an hour dash flashing past us, hear the scream and rush, feel its hot blast on our face, and the earth quivering under our feet without the slightest emo-

tion. But take your stand on the engine itself, and all is changed. Then every thing regains its significance—every thing presents itself in a new and terrible light; and, helpless in the horrible presence of death, you feel absolutely no control over your emotions or actions: you are in other hands than your own. Let the firm hand of that bronzed figure beside you fail; let the sharp eye read false the bits of flickering glass that twinkle in the distance, and you know well that in one minute you may be a shapeless mass of flesh, 'undistinguishable in member, joint, and limb.' These feelings were not altogether absent from me when I, a few nights ago, mounted, for the first time in my life, the engine of one of the night expresses. We were to run about seventy miles without stopping, and I was advised, therefore, by my friend the engine-driver to provide myself with something hot, 'the hair bein',' as he remarked, 'werry sharp in the early morning.' The engine which was to take us was one of the most splendid on the line, bright and new with its polished boilers, through which the steam was hissing, glittering under the station-lamps, and its tall, bold funnel, with its rim of copper, smoking idly, like an *effete* volcano. Gradually the carriages filled; presently the sharp whistle of the guard rang through the air, and an abrupt scream almost simultaneously follow-

ed from the engine. The steam was turned on. A thrill of life seemed to vibrate spasmodically through the iron frame of the huge mass of machinery before me. It panted hard, and, shooting up huge volumes of dense vapor, began slowly to move. Easier and easier seemed the effort, and in a few minutes we were fairly on our way. Out into the night we passed, faster and faster became our speed; the course was cleared, its ragged outskirts were disappearing; fields and plains were bursting on our view, and with a dull, hollow roar we passed over two bridges—the shadow of lurid lights and feathery drifts of smoke flecking for an instant the inky surface of the waters beneath. On we sped. On each side of us now were the open fields; the cattle lay motionless, heaps of white, in the glimmer, careless and stirless, though we passed them so close; ever and anon the dark form of a grazing horse would betray a momentary restlessness as we shot by. The tall leafy trees, the hedges and brooks, were sleeping in peace, and though there was no moon we could somehow see them quite distinctly. Sometimes we would pass a quiet country village, with its beautiful spear-like spire and its shadowy burial-ground, where the white head-stones looked, in the spectral light, like the ghosts of the departed brooding over their place of rest. What a contrast to the mad hurricane of iron

that was flaring past them! Our speed now seemed perfectly awful.

"The wheels bounded and sprang, and the roar was so deafening that when I tried to ascertain from the stoker close to me at what speed we were traveling, he could not catch a word, though I shouted at the top of my voice. The metals running parallel with us seemed dashing along in headlong chase after us, and telegraph wires dipped and twisted as I looked at them. Far in the distance I could discern masses of black; they seemed miles away, but in a few seconds they assumed the shape of bridges, and with hollow whirl we shot them behind us. Presently I saw masses of lights, motionless heaps of trunks, signal-posts and lamps. Nearer and nearer we drew; it was a large station. Never shall I forget this scene. Just as we entered it, the driver happened to throw open the furnace, and in an instant the white ghost-like smoke which floated like a banner over our heads was changed into a lurid mass of flame; the draught, as we entered the station, blew it about in every direction, and a blood-red mist enveloped the whole engine. In a blind fog, with the whistle screaming in my ears, the wild echoes booming and reverberating from every part of the roofed station, the hot furnace licking in the coal at my feet—I could see nothing, I could do nothing, and I held

tightly on to the rail, stunned and helpless. Again into the night we passed, as the confused mass of lights flashed by. I saw the signals change from white into blood-red as we flew past, but it had no significance for me. Every thing seemed mad. I never realized till then what an 'accident' really meant; never understood the debt of gratitude we all owe to the fine, conscientious, laborious fellows into whose hands we intrust our lives. For the whole length of that journey the driver's eye never wandered from the front; his keen forward-searching face scarce one moment altered its position, and it was easy to see that the wear and tear incident to such prolonged tension had marked and marred his face ere its time. At last our speed slackened, a blood-red light flared on the metals before us, morning was lacing the clouds, and very glad was I to grasp the hands of my swarthy companions, and, stepping on to the platform at my destination, wish them good-bye and God-speed. With the roar of the engine still ringing in my ears, and the glare of the signals even yet vexing my eyes, I betook myself to rest, glad to be safe again on *terra firma*, gladder to have gained the experience I had gained."

THE YARDSMAN.

Yardsmen are employed at large stations where trains are made up for dispatch.

The cars which are intended to form a single freight or mixed train may be scattered widely over a dépôt yard. There is one in the warehouse track; another in the lumber side-track; another in a coal side-track; another in repair-track, among defective cars.

It is the yardsman's work to accompany a small switching-engine, the engineer and fireman of which are under his orders, and collect together all the cars suitable for dispatch on the train he is making up.

These switching-engines move about with great rapidity. The yardsman, knowing where the cars he wants are, couples on to one, then to another, and another. The engine "kicks" them into a side-track and returns for more. In this way the cars are picked out and the train made up.

In these operations a yardsman runs great risks; and in the matter of coupling cars, he jeopardizes his life oftener than a freight brakeman.

Many yardsmen are killed—by being crushed between cars, by being run over when not aware of an approaching engine, or caught by the foot between the rails of a switch, and so held until knocked down and run over.

The work is also very hard, but liberally paid for.

A yardsman is on the move from morning to night, getting under, and over, and along, and coupling and uncoupling cars, putting brakes on and off; and all the while doing his work systematically, so that trains may be made up or distributed with the least amount of switching.

He knows every inch of his large dépôt yard; the beginning and end of every side-track, and the peculiarities of every switch; keeps out of the way of engines coming and going; is on the lookout to utilize every fraction of a minute, to seize every chance to cross *this* track, to get along *that*, to run a little way here, or a little way there, to dodge in and out along the crowded lines with his engine, and so collect his cars.

It often happens that a minute lost delays a yardsman's movements for hours; in his work every movement is of the greatest value. Sam K——, an experienced yardsman, had a narrow escape. He told me about it.

THE YARDSMAN'S STORY.

"You see, sir," he said, "we were backing some box cars up to couple on to a flat car. We were about a yard off the flat, and I noticed the draw-irons

were uneven. When they met they would overlap, and I should likely be a dead man.

"I could not get out, because we were close alongside the warehouse. I was in a tight place. I thought I'd drop down and escape, but the brake gear was out of order on the box car, and I knew I should lose my legs that way.

"I had just about three seconds to make up my mind which way I'd take it—lose my legs or my life.

"I thought I'd rather be killed than crippled. So I threw my arms up—I had not time to pray—and I suppose I was badly damaged.

"I'm right again now, after a three months' lay-off; but no more 'yarding' for me; I an't lucky. I've had both arms broke, right hand smashed, lost a finger, had my foot hurt, my body bruised, and came mighty nigh being squeezed out altogether.

"I don't hanker after 'yarding;' but if you've got an inside place, such as wiping lamps or checking baggage, name the pay."

FOG-SIGNALS, ETC.

Detonators, fog-signals, or torpedoes, as they are variously called, are used to stop trains when there is danger ahead, and when the weather is such that ordinary day or night signals would not be seen in time.

When a train breaks down on the main-track, if the night is clear, a brakeman is sent half a mile back with a lamp; if foggy, he takes with him five or six torpedoes, and fastens them down at distances of one hundred or one hundred and fifty yards apart, on the left and right hand rails alternately.

When an engine runs over one of them, it explodes with a noise sufficient to attract the engineer's attention. If only one is run over, it is taken as an intimation to go cautiously; if more, to stop at once.

A NEW DEVICE FOR SIGNALING.

Accidents have occasionally been caused by engineers not being able to distinguish at night whether trains they have to meet at certain points were standing on the side or main tracks.

A device has recently been adopted by some roads to prevent such mistakes.

The head-lamp of an engine is fitted with a shade of green transparent material, which can be drawn across the light at any moment by the engineer.

When in the side-track, the white light is exhibited; but when it goes out on the main-track the shade is drawn across, and the green light is shown, and continues to be shown, as long as the engine remains on the main-track.

This distinguishing light is a great advantage.

On a bar in front of the light are hung figures designating the number of the train, so that all train-men and others interested in the movement of trains are informed at once what train it is.

Another novel adjunct to the locomotive is the automatic bell.

Passengers may have observed a bell immediately over the cow-catcher. This rings incessantly while the engine is in motion, thus giving good warning to track-men and others on the track, and teams approaching the crossings.

The bell is worked by an attachment to the eccentric rod, and is a most valuable contrivance for the prevention of accident.

CHAPTER VII.

THE DÉPÔT AGENT.

The Dépôt Agent.—His Duties.—How a small Station is run.—The Agent at Leisure.—Fun by Wire.—The puzzled Agent.—A Flagstation.—How not to do it.—The Dépôt Ticket-clerk.—Why he is barred in.—A rough Customer.—The tiresome old Lady.—A Case of "Inquire within for every thing."—An anxious Moment.—Meanness of a Passenger.—The lost Ticket.—Remarkable Incident in the Career of a T. C., and blissful Result thereof.

THE dépôt agent is responsible for every thing that goes on at his dépôt, the prompt dispatch of trains therefrom, and the proper maintenance of discipline among baggage-masters, yardsmen, switch-tenders, porters, police, and other employés connected with the operating of the line, exclusive of engineers and trackmen, who, of course, are under their own foremen.

His duties at a large dépôt are manifold and onerous.

He must keep his eyes on every thing.

A vigorous dépôt agent will make his men industrious, and the working of his dépôt energetic and prompt; while, on the other hand, if he is easy-go-

ing, it will be readily seen in the slow movements of his men.

At a certain dépôt, where things would not go right anyway, man after man was discharged in the hope of improvement, but all to no purpose.



THE DÉPÔT AGENT.

At last it was suggested to dismiss the dépôt agent; and as his successor was a quick, bustling fellow, every thing soon began to work to a charm.

The above remarks only apply to large dépôts, where many men are employed, but there are places where the agent is the only man; and he has to act as baggage-master, switch-tender, porter, ticket-clerk, telegraph operator, etc. Of course, the business is small, but it keeps him pretty busy, as his work comes upon him all at once, and about the time trains are due to leave or arrive.

He would be better able to perform his duties if he had three heads to think with, and a corresponding number of speaking attachments, and three pairs of hands and arms; but as he has not, he acutely feels the disadvantage attending the nature of matter in general—that it can only be in one place at one time.

He has to make a rush at a trunk, go back to the telegraph office and send off a few clicks, sell a ticket, run outside and set up a target, light a lamp and go and swing it, lay it down again and go and send off a few more clicks, fetch a baggage truck and put a few trunks on it, get his pen and make out a way-bill, put some water in the water-cooler, address a few reports to the general superintendent, and wipe his perspiring brow while answering the interrogatories of waiting passengers.

Then, when a train comes in, he wants to tell the engineer something, and inform the conductor, who

is standing at the other end of the train, of the orders affecting him.

At the same time he has to take the trunks from the train baggage-master's hands, and answer the questions of loquacious friends who recognize him from the cars—all in the space of a minute.

Away goes the train, and the man who was so full of business a few moments before has nothing whatever to do.

For want of better employment, he may go and have a game with his wife and children, and play at checking them for some distant place, pretending to dismiss his four-year-old boy—who is to be a baggage-master when he grows up—because he says he would not check the trunk of a traveling elephant.

Or he may light his pipe, and go and con the documents he has on hand; or enjoy a friendly click of conversation with his operating friend at X—.

Such conversations sometimes miscarry.

An agent telegraphs, "Well, my blooming, sweet-scented daffodil, how are you?"

A strange operator may get hold of his message, and, under a misapprehension, hand it in to the general superintendent.

That is very awkward.

Or he may say, as a preliminary to a little talk,

"Well, my gay and festive cherub, how do you feel about now?"

To which may come the tart reply from a female operator, who has answered his signal,

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself. Leave the instrument, you old man, or I will tell your wife!"

THE PUZZLED AGENT.

The following is rather ludicrous:

The evening was hot, and the agent at M—— was lying down on the lounge to wait till the night-train slacked up for the mail-bags to be put on board.

He laid his lantern on the floor and fell asleep.

Suddenly he was awakened by the thundering noise of the train slacking up at the dépôt.

Hastily jumping up, he seized his pants in one hand and the mail-bag in the other, and reached the platform in the nick of time, just as the train was passing.

Not fully awake, he hurled his pants on the forward platform of the rear car, and then, realizing his mistake, attempted to rectify it by throwing the lantern after them on the rear platform.

The train was gone, yet there he stood with the mail-bag in his hands, and his snow-white garments gently fluttering in the soft, undulating, summer air.

If there had been another car to pass, the poor

PULLMAN PALACE CAR



THE PERPLEXED BAGGAGE-MAN.

sleepy man would probably have thrown himself on board, and left the mail-bag to take care of the dépôt!

Feeling that he had completely mixed matters, he rushed to the telegraph instrument, so as to set things straight at the next station.

"Click, click"—"Send back mail-bag. Pants and lantern here O. K."

He felt relieved, and went to bed after that exploit.

A FLAG-STATION.

A good story is told of a station agent on the line of the X. Y. and Z. Railroad.

It was proposed to make one of the stopping-places a "flag-station," where it is necessary for the agent to display a signal to an approaching train, if he has any passengers to go by it, and at which it does not stop unless that signal is displayed, or the conductor has passengers on board for that station.

On one occasion, before the agent had "learned the way," a train came thundering along for —, not intending to stop.

Out rushed Mr. Agent, a little behind time, with a red flag. The whistle sounded and the brakes were put down, and the train stopped, but not until it had run quite a distance beyond the station.

Then the train backed up, the conductor jumped off, sang his old-time song of "All aboard!" in a musical tenor, and asked the agent where his passenger was.

"Oh!" said he, with sweet innocence, "I haven't any body to get on, but I didn't know but you might have somebody to get off!"

The conductor gazed at him with mingled feelings too deep for utterance.

He went and whispered to the engineer; but the fire-box was quite full of cord-wood—and so they could not have got that agent in without losing time.

THE DÉPÔT TICKET-CLERK.

The duty of a ticket-clerk is to answer questions and sell tickets.

He answers more questions than he sells tickets, for almost every body who buys a ticket has at least three or four questions to ask.

Travelers seem to think the ticket is "mighty dear" unless two or three pieces of information are thrown into the bargain.

There is, for some reason, a sort of natural animosity between the ticket-purchaser and the ticket-clerk; and it is certain he could never carry on his occupation if he were not in an inclosure.



THE TICKET-CLERK.

Perhaps his being barred in so that he could not be got at, even if any body wanted to get at him in the worst way, has a tendency to arouse the feeling I mention; at all events, it exists, and if he were not fenced in he would need to be a courageous fellow.

The apartment he occupies has generally only a small hole for communication between himself and the public outside.

This hole is big enough to admit a man's head.

His head is all the ticket-clerk has to do with; he does not require to see the remainder of his proportions.

He will sell a ticket to a man with one leg as readily as to a man with two.

He will make no reduction on account of a man not being "all there."

A man who had been pared off a good deal by occasionally getting too near buzz-saws, thought he was entitled to travel at half-fare, as only about half of him was left over; but the ticket-clerk would make no allowance as long as he had his head on.

Passengers are not carried by weight. If they were, I don't see how the business could possibly be done, weights vary so much, from time to time, in both sexes.

"Look here, young man," says a rough kind of fellow through the hole, "how do prices run in these times to D——?"

"Fifty-two cents," replies the ticket-clerk, with the greatest urbanity.

"That's pretty dear! I'll give you fifty."

"Can't take less than fifty-two."

"You can't take less 'n fifty-two! You don't mean to say you want the two odd cents?"

"Yes, sir. Fifty-two cents is my tariff. Will you take the ticket?"

"Yes."

Ticket-clerk stamps the ticket, and the fifty-two cents are slowly handed over.

"Well, you air the meanest cuss I've met to-day!" says the individual, thrusting his head through the hole.

"You're a mis'able skinflint! If I had you out here for five minutes, I'd knock the spots off you—I'd put a head on you!"

As the man appears to be capable of knocking the spots off him, and also of putting a head on him, the ticket-clerk glances at the door to make sure it is bolted, and with a ghastly smile surveys his secure position.

An elderly lady takes her turn at the aperture.

The ticket-clerk is busy; morning trains are nearly due to leave, and passengers are rushing in for tickets.

"Good-mornin', young man," remarks the elderly lady; "it's a nice mornin'."

"Do you want a ticket, madam?" says the clerk.

"Of course I want a ticket, young man. • You wouldn't see me here if I didn't want a ticket."

Old lady smiles at this, and looks round for applause; but the public, waiting their turn at the window, don't see the point.

"Where do you want a ticket to, madam?" again asks the ticket-clerk.

"Why, I'm gwine to see my da'ter. She's been—"

"What place?" jerks the ticket-clerk; "where does she live?"

"Why, young man, she don't live thar; you see, it came on to her kind o' suddent, and—"

"Now, look here, my good woman," begins the ticket-clerk, fairly out of patience.

"Now, don't ye call me a woman," cries the old lady. "Ye skinny whipper-snapper, I wouldn't handle yer dirty tickets; I'll pay on the kears to a *gentleman*."

With this insulting emphasis she makes room for an old lady who forgets the name of the place she is going to, and requests the ticket-clerk to read over one or two lists of places. She says if she heard the name, she should know it in a minute.

Fussy old Gentleman. "Look here, young man, what time does the next train call?"

"5.45, sir."

"5.45!" rejoins the querist, in astonishment. "I thought it was a quarter to six. How you do change!"

"Look here, mister, you didn't give me enough money. I handed you a ten-dollar bill; you must have took it up, and I want five dollars more."

Ticket-clerk looks at his cash, and finds he has not taken a ten-dollar bill that day so far. He replies:

"You must be mistaken, sir; I gave you your proper money."

"Wa'al, I say you didn't; do you want to cheat me?"

"No, sir; I merely say I gave you your proper money."

"And I merely say you are a thundering liar; and if I had you outside this hole, I'd bust yer snout!"

Ticket-clerk instinctively feels if that organ is in its proper place, and the conductor's "All aboard!" attracts the pugnacious traveler to the cars.

This is the kind of individual who sends such precious effusions as the following to the general superintendent:

"Sir,—Your ticket-clerk at —— is a theaf; he robd me of a five-doler bill, and when I taxt him with his vileny, he aboosed me in the wurst wa. Yew had better discharg him rite away.

"A REGLAR TRAVELER ON YER ROUT."

Of course the general superintendent would take no notice of such an epistle; but these are the charges, treatment, and nuisances to which a ticket-clerk is subject. He must have patience enough to bear abuse without retaliation, and to answer with apparent pleasure daily, hourly, weekly, all the year round, the same old, commonplace questions.

"What is the fare to —?"

"When does the next train start?"

"Does it go to —?"

"I guess it don't go so far as —, does it?"

"What is the train before that; and what is the train next to that?"

"Is there a sleeping-car on it?"

"Is there a smoking-car on it? If there an't, I think it's a derved shame."

"Is the next train on time?"

"Does it mostly run on time?"

"Will there be a berth to be had?"

"Is there mostly?"

"Will it connect?"

"Where is the saloon?"

"Young man, you seem kind o' snappish. Where's the general superintendent's office; I'd like to tell him to keep more civil men on this route."

"If you will just put your head through this hole, I'll bust yer nose," etc., etc.

So goes the ticket-clerk's work from day to day. As I said before, if he were not fenced in he could not perform his duties; it is necessary to fence him in.

The most anxious moment of the ticket-clerk's day is when he compares his tickets on hand with his cash.

His money may balance, and it may not.

If he comes out ten dollars short, he had better have been laid up at home all day with a jumping headache, or a blister on his back and a poor man's plaster on his chest. He had better have suffered any thing in the way of temporary ailments, for when he went to bed he would have been better off than if he had gone to his office.

A young man said, with great glee, that he had made "a good thing." He had handed in a five-dollar bill for a ticket which was a dollar, and received nine dollars and the ticket in exchange.

He seemed to think this result was in some way traceable to his superior abilities.

I suggested it was a mistake of the ticket-clerk, and that of course he handed it back.

"Handed it back!" cried he, as though an offense was implied to his common sense. "I should guess not—not for Joseph! Oh dear, no! Oh yes, of course not!"

I remarked that that would have been the proper course under the circumstances.

"Now, look here," he said; "I reckon it an't often I have a chance against the railroad company, and I've got them this time, that's sure."

Determined to rectify the matter, I left this nice young man, and informed the ticket-clerk of what had passed.

Getting the dépôt master to take charge of his office for a moment, we went to the man who was "five dollars ahead," and who, by this time, was informing another listener of the circumstances.

The interview ended by the money being refunded, much to the chagrin of the nice young man.

He declared he never would have dreamed of retaining the amount if he had thought for a moment the loss would have fallen upon the ticket-seller.

Of course the loss would have fallen upon the ticket-seller, and his wife or children would have had to forego their new boots, or something else equally necessary.

A man must have a curious notion of morality who would rob a corporation, and joke over the exploit, but who would shrink with sensitiveness from the thought of defrauding a ticket-clerk.

Such losses always fall upon the ticket-clerk.

"Look here, young man," cries a thin, elderly lady,

"I gave you the money, but you did not give me my ticket."

"You are mistaken, madam; I gave you your ticket," replies the ticket-clerk.

"But I tell you you did not!" rejoins the elderly lady, stamping her foot. "Do you want to take advantage of a young woman?"

Ticket-clerk says he does not feel like it, and asks her if she has felt in all her pockets.

"Yes, I have, sir."

"Have you looked in your purse, madam?"

"Yes, sir."

"Madam, might I ask if you could have put it inside your dress, near your—your *chest*, for instance?"

Ticket-clerk blushes.

"Young man, I will thank you not to give me any of your impudence; you've no right to suppose I've got any thing there." But, having by this time furtively introduced her hand into the locality in question, she cries,

"Well, I swan!" and draws out the ticket.

Some people seem to ask questions for the mere sake of asking them.

"Young man, when does the *next* train go to L——?"

"Six P.M., sir."

"When does *the one before that* leave?"

"There isn't one."

"Well, I guess you had me there!"

"I want a ticket to W—— *via* X——."

"You can not go to W—— *via* X——; you must go *via* Z——."

"Well, I'd rather not go on that road. They had a smash-up the other day. Why on earth can't I go the other way?"

"Because the train doesn't go."

"Young man, I'd recommend you to keep a civil tongue in your head."

The accommodation has gone, so the ticket-clerk shuts the window and tries to get a few moments at his accounts. They entail a good deal of work.

But some one taps tremulously at the window.

Clerk determines not to notice it—must do his books.

Tremulous tap again.

Clerk thinks it must be some sweet, timid young lady, gets up, and goes to the window.

There she stands, just as he had pictured—timid, lovely, and in distress.

"Oh, sir, can you let me have a ticket to C——; I have no money; but I'll give you my papa's address. He will send it to you, he will indeed! I've had the misfortune to lose my purse, and by another misfortune I'm traveling alone."

Ticket-clerk rapidly forms an opinion of his suppliant, and says,

"Well, miss, we ticket-clerks have not much money of our own, and can't afford to lend it; but I will advance the \$5 60 if you can promise to send it back in two days."

The fair petitioner assures him he can rely upon having it back by then—he can, indeed; and hands in her father's address, written on the back of her photo. She asks ticket-clerk to accept it in recognition of his kindness.

She disappears, and the ticket-clerk gazes long on the picture.

He repels the thought that that money will not come back, like more he has lent in the same way; he feels it must come back—

"Such eyes as those could ne'er deceive,
Those lips ne'er utter words untrue."

The money did come back; and so did the young lady and her aristocratic papa.

She insisted on counting it out of her father's purse, and handing it over herself, much increasing the happiness of the ticket-clerk, who began to feel the tenderest interest in his beautiful creditor.

He would have said, "Oh no, keep it, I beg;" but that would not do.

I should now explain that the ticket-clerk was unmarried, and an uncommonly nice young man in all respects. He had no father.

The beautiful young lady was also uncommonly nice in all respects.

She had no mother.

He was invited by the father, who was also an uncommonly nice old man in all respects (he had neither father nor mother), to call at their hotel. The young lady begged him to do so, and he did.

* * * * *

So the twain were made one, and they lived happily together, especially the ticket-clerk, he having, like Adam, no mother-in-law.

The moral of the foregoing story is O. K., if the story itself is not.

It is written for the encouragement of drooping ticket-sellers.



THE BETROTHAL AT THE HOTEL.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BAGGAGE-MASTER.

The Baggage-master.—Unceremonious Treatment.—A Man of few Friends.—The disappointed Travelers.—The Ass's Appeal to Jove.—Moral.—A good Idea.—Accidentally Shot.—Truly Remarkable.—A fancy Inventory.—Baggage Registration in Europe.—The Baggage-master's Story.—Old Perk among the Trunks.—The mysterious Groan, and extraordinary Contents of a Piece of Baggage.—Happy *Denouement*.

THE proverbial baggage-master is the *bête noire* of railroad travelers.

How systematically, dear lady, you pack your trunk, wrapping up in your under-clothing with care the little indispensables liable to fracture!

Now, you think, if your baggage does suffer a little rough usage, that glass ware will certainly be safe.

The hack is at the door, the man adjusting the straps, and you suddenly find you have forgotten the cholera mixture, without which, in the summer months, you can not think of traveling.

The bottle is hastily thrust inside, with a sort of

misgiving that it should have been wrapped in one of your petticoats; the trunk is strapped, carefully placed on the hack, and away you go to the dépôt.

It is presented to the dépôt man to be checked.

That functionary has had a good breakfast and feels strong; his muscles contract and extend with vigor. He views the baggage, gives it some unceremonious turns, teetotum-like, and upside down, and after having kicked it and otherwise maltreated it in the most superfluous way, "concludes" to check it.

He checks it. You pocket the duplicate. The railroad company is responsible for it now, and that thought gives you ease.

But you can not become indifferent all at once; so you cast a furtive backward glance toward the place where you left it, just in time to witness the prowess of the dépôt man, who essays to throw it on the iron baggage-truck. He hurls it too far, and capsizes the vehicle, which falls with all its weight upon the luckless end where you know is the cholera mixture.

Walk on, dear lady; "what the eye does not see, the heart does not grieve." Do not stop to witness your precious trunk ruthlessly thrown into the baggage-car; *you* are painfully conscious of what is in

it; the baggage-master is not. And it is really wonderful how, after all that rough handling, the china dolls for your nieces and the bottle of cholera mixture are not broken into a thousand atoms.

The baggage-master has few friends among travelers.

He is the iconoclast of household gods.

Many a nervous traveler—nervous on account of his baggage—has left his comfortable seat at a local stopping-place to saunter by the baggage-car, hoping to assure himself, by a sidelong glance at the familiar name, "Thomas Jones," printed on the end, of the safety of his valise; and that nervous traveler has returned a sadder and a wiser man. He has espied that valise on the top of many others, but so placed that the least jolting of the car must shake it down and out of the door-way, to be lost forever.

Or he has observed the gymnast in charge, without any apparent reason for so doing but the muscular exercise afforded, fling it from one end of the car to the other, and remorselessly pile upon the fragile thing the heaviest Saratoga trunks.

The observer retires to his sleeping-berth, and dreamingly wonders whether the valise would be better on top or at the bottom, while the lines run forever in his head—the very rattling of the cars pronounces them—

"Take it up tenderly,
Lift it with care,
Fashioned so slenderly,
Bottles in there!"

It was at a miserable station in the Humboldt Desert on the C. P. R., when my friend, with whom I was making a trip to California, remarked with a beaming smile upon his face—a smile of pleasing anticipation—that he thought the proper time had come to make a visit to his portmanteau; the alkali had made him thirsty; and in that leathern receptacle was a little of—just think of it, in the Humboldt Desert—a bottle of fine old rye whisky!

He came back. I had in the interim been getting two half-glasses of cold water ready, and, turning round at his approach, presented the tumblers for the fine old rye. I was terribly shocked at the blank and woe-begone expression of his face. If he had lost his mother-in-law he could not have looked more grief-stricken and dismayed. The bottle was broken, and the spirit had fled!

It is not to be expected that baggage-masters with heavy trunks to lift and sort out, often in a very insufficient time, will always manipulate them with the delicacy their owners could desire; and it appears to me that, considering the vast amount of baggage handled by baggage-masters, the aggregate damage

der
his

done is little, and is less owing to the strength of baggage-masters than to the weakness of trunks.

Every body knows the fable (Lessing's, I think) of the Ass's Appeal to Jove.



THE DISAPPOINTMENT.

The fortitude of the patient ass had given way under some new trial; and, with a tear trickling down his honest nose, he appeared before the god.

"Oh, mighty Jove!" he said, "why should I bear

these constant cruelties from man? Why should I be treated more unmercifully than all his servants; I who toil from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof, and am contented with the humblest fare—a little straw and water. No service, however toilsome, can conciliate him, and my patience even seems a cause for punishment. Soften his heart toward me, oh Jove, and your petitioner will ever bray."

To this the god replied how deeply he regretted he had no power over the heart of man; but added (laying a finger on the side of his celestial nose, as though a bright idea had struck him), "I think I can do something else as good. I will make your hide so thick and tough that the hardest blows will never give you pain." Which was accordingly done.

MORAL. — Seeing the hard treatment to which trunks must inevitably be subjected, have them made stronger, and defy the baggage-master.

A GOOD IDEA.

Some general superintendents adopt the judicious course of making baggage-masters "contribute" to the claims arising from the careless handling of trunks. This has a salutary effect, and, if persisted in, may perhaps bring about the happy time when trunks will be handled as tenderly as if they were babes.

A grim kind of retributive justice is chronicled in the following extracts from a newspaper, handed to me while writing the foregoing:

"ACCIDENTALLY SHOT.—A baggage-man on the nine o'clock train for N. F. was badly wounded in the leg by the accidental discharge of a revolver in a valise. Surgical aid was rendered by Dr. —, who happened to be in the dépôt at the time."



THE CARELESS BAGGAGE-MAN.

"ACCIDENTALLY SHOT.—A baggage-man on the B. and N. F. Road met with an accident which, according to report, will prove fatal. It seems he was engaged receiving baggage in his car while it was standing in the dépôt in B., when he picked up a sachel which, in carry-

ing along the car, he *knocked against a trunk*, and an explosion followed. It was found that a revolver which was in the sachel had been accidentally discharged, and the ball had entered his leg and passed upward into the groin."

After baggage-men have been "accidentally shot" a few times, as narrated above, they will probably be careful how they knock valises up against trunks.

TRULY REMARKABLE.

It is a noteworthy fact that, when a piece of baggage goes astray, it always chances to contain a most valuable assortment of articles, *i. e.*, according to the inventory accompanying the claim of the owner against the railroad company.

A claim for a lost bag came recently under my notice; and when it was found it contained all that a bag of its size could contain—a shirt, a tooth-brush, a comb, and a paper collar.

The inventory was:

6 fin da shuts.....	\$30 00
6 box fin lining kollers.....	10 00
8 komes and brushes.....	7 50
8 2 th brushes.....	1 50
Amount expended for nu thinks to git along with...	25 50
Total.....	<u>\$74 50</u>

On making the observation to the claimant that the bag, according to all that could be learned about

it, was a very small one, he remarked that "Sich bags held a heap; you never knew when sich bags was full."

The inventory should have been:

1 shut	\$1 50
1 2 th brush.....	0 25
1 kome.....	0 25
1 paper koller.....	0 02
Total.....	\$2 02

But the company got out of this claim by handing the owner his bag. He said, as he walked away with it, that he felt "darned glad to git it back anyhow." But he looked "darned" sorry.

The system of checking baggage in use upon American railroads is an excellent one, and so well elaborated as to afford proper security to the owner, and enable the companies to trace it, with an approach to certainty, when it goes astray.

A trunk is checked in the "Far West" for some remote Eastern point, the duplicate being handed to the owner as a receipt for the same. It passes over five or six different railroads, and its number is registered in a dozen different books, with particulars as to date, etc., by dépôt and train baggage-masters.

The trunk does not exactly "leave its *foot-prints* on the sands of time," as the famous Sir Boyle Roche

might have said; but its course is noted by so many registers that the chances are always in favor of finding it.

There is no system of checking baggage in vogue in Europe as practiced in the States. There is a plan of registration on some roads which is cumbrous and impracticable, except to a small extent, consisting as it does of giving a written receipt, the duplicate of which is pasted on the trunk. But the burden of looking after it falls generally upon the owner.

A newly-arrived European lady, having received checks for her baggage in New York, gave them to her children to play with; and on a gentleman remarking with polite concern that she had better take care of those bits of brass, she replied, "Ho, hit does not matter hin the least; there are hothers just like them hon the trunks."

Nothing is so calculated to disturb one's equanimity as to find at the end of a journey that your baggage is missing. The bride without her *trousseau* stamps her pretty foot and cries bitterly—the bridegroom swears; the parson without his sermons doesn't exactly swear, but just makes a few *cursor*y remarks. The irritable man in such a case is like a tomeet a-curling of his spine; and the philosopher can't "philosophe." It's of no use telling him Job had patience. Job never lost his trunk.

THE BAGGAGE-MASTER'S STORY.

"It was several years ago I was sitting in this very baggage-room, and old Perk—his name was Perkins, but we shortened it to Perk—who was baggage-master before I was, was sitting in that same corner as you are, sir. It cost him so much of his pay for spectacles trying to make out the numbers on the checks, that he gave up the job soon after his eyesight failed, and I got it.

"Before the old man died he used to come down here quite frequent to sit with me, and have a talk through the night. Old Perk was fond of his 'bacco, and never could enjoy it so well as among the trunks.

"Well, one cold and stormy night in the middle of winter, when it was about time for the lightning express to put in a show, I took my lamp and went to find out how she was.

"I was not long finding out, for as I stood there I heard an awful smash.

"The lightning express had run into a switching-engine at the east end of the yard.

"That made things lively for a little time; but the wrecking gangs got the damaged engines clear, threw the broken baggage-car on one side, coupled another engine on; and the train, with a very short

delay, went on her way West, leaving the baggage all piled up in this room, to be sent on by the morning train.

"As I said before, it was a cold night, and when the work was through, I was only too glad to get near the stove and have another smoke with old Perk. Perk had made up his mind not to go home that night, for fear of losing his way in the drifts.

"'Did you ever hear that story about that trunk?' said old Perk.

"I said, 'What trunk?'

"'Oh, shav! I'll tell you all about it'

"And old Perk told how one of the night hands, named Tim, was always coming into the baggage-room to keep him company, as he said. But Perk used sometimes to fall asleep, and dream that Tim was 'going through' the trunks.

"Tim had a sneaking kind o' way.

"Well, one night, when old Perk was part asleep and part awake, he thought he saw Tim try to open a box.

"'What are you doing, Tim?'

"Tim said he was just tightening the ropes round that trunk.

"A few minutes after, old Perk was aroused by a piercing shriek.

"Tim, the trunk pilferer, had unlocked a trunk

and raised the lid, and, while stealthily feeling inside in the dim light for what he could get, had drawn out a ghastly human hand and arm, while a horrid skeleton sat grinning at him in the box.

"Poor Tim! He could not drop the cold hand he held in his; it seemed to hold him like a vise. He fell on his knees, and the cold sweat poured out of him while he cried, 'Howly Mary! howly Mary! howly Mary!' and at last swooned away on the floor.

"The medical student's box nearly cost poor Tim his life. The fright threw him into a fever, but I guess it cured him of opening other people's trunks.

"When Old Perk had finished this unpleasant story he fell asleep. I began to feel uncomfortable; the room smelled close; my imagination was excited.

"I looked at the trunks suspiciously, and had a vague idea that all the lightning express baggage contained human limbs, dead bodies, and grinning skeletons.

"Old Perk snored; and to drive away unpleasant fancies I began counting how many times he would snore before three o'clock.

"He had snored just one hundred and seventy-three times, when I thought I heard a groan!

"You might have knocked me down with a pick—
—I mean a tooth-pick—I felt so scared.

"I rudely shook old Perk.

"'Was that you, old Perk? Did you moan, Perkins?'

"'I guess so,' he cried, and went to sleep again.

"Again I heard the same sound, only longer.

"My hair got up.

"I felt a clammy moisture oozing out of me, I was so frightened.

"'Perk,' I said, 'say that was you; you groaned, didn't you, Mr. Perk. If you did, for God's sake say so, Mr. Perkins!'

"I shook him so much that there was no fear he would go to sleep again.

"'Don't make a noise like that, Perk,' I said; 'it's almost enough to frighten a fellow—you should not do it. Let's have another smoke, Mr. Perkins.'

"But I had not time to light up, for a cry, quick and awful, knocked pipe, 'bacco, and matches out of my hand!

"I darted toward old Perk. His face was blanched, and his limbs trembling with fright.

"'The box! the box!' he said, and fell heavily down, scared out of his senses.

"Remembering I had a bottle of medicine in the lock-up, which gave off a smell of brandy, I put it to Mr. Perkins's mouth, and then, desperately seizing a hammer, began to burst open the box on which Perk had sat.

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THE YOUNG LADY FOUND IN THE TRUNK.

"Between each blow was a stifled groan.

"It was a hard box to open.

"Perk, hurry up! Get that iron bar!"

"The old man came to like a shot, and between us we loosened the lid.

"The moment we had done so it flew open!

"I expected a horrible sight—a grinning skeleton with a spiral-spring backbone, or something of that sort at least; but bless you, sir, there sat in the trunk the loveliest young girl, her wavy yellow hair streaming over her neck and shoulders ('the Lord be praised!' cried old Perk), her large blue eyes beaming with tears of thankfulness for deliverance. She tried to throw her arms round my neck, but bless you, sir, they were so stiff she could not do it.

"Lend a hand, old Perk,' I said; and together we lifted the poor, stiffened young lady out of her prison-house.

"Let me hold the dear creature on my knee,' said Perk.

"No,' I said; 'I'm going to hold her on my knee.'

"Let me chafe her limbs, then,' he said.

"No,' I said; 'I'm baggage-master, and I'm going to do all the chafing necessary on this occasion.'

"So I chafed her until her arms could wind round my neck; but I had to hold her on my knee a long, long time—the dear girl was so stiff.

"Old Perk gave her a little of the medicine, and then she began to talk a little. You should have heard her, sir—she was so full of love and gratitude toward me and old Perk, though I must say she did not seem to care much for Mr. Perkins."

"How came she in the trunk?"

"Why, you see she was an orphan, and the adopted child of a rich, miserly old uncle. He wanted to get her through to C—— without paying her fare. He thought he could do it by putting her in that box with a few air-holes, being allowed one hundred pounds of baggage free."

"Did he claim his baggage?"

"Well, I guess not, sir. He must have been kind o' scared when he found the box did not reach C——, and so afraid it had been damaged in the smash-up in the yard that he durst not ask after it."

"What became of the sweet young woman?"

"Well, stranger, that sweet young woman is my wife, and as it's getting toward morning, I guess I'll just ask you to go and sit in the waiting-room. I want to go home and hold the baby while she gets up and dresses herself."

CHAPTER IX.

THE BRAKEMAN.

The Brakeman.—Mistaken Zeal.—Some of his Duties.—An easy Job.—The Freight Brakeman.—Dangerous Work.—An unsuitable Applicant.—An uncomfortable Dance.—The Brakeman's Story.—Fall into Black Creek.—Results of a Brakewheel giving way.

If he is engaged on a passenger-train, his chief employment (as it appears to passengers), if it is winter, is to put wood in the stoves.

It matters not whether the car is cold or stiflingly hot, his duty is to put in wood.

You can not stop him putting it in; he will do it.

The passenger brakeman is usually a person of considerable assurance, and if he feels talkative, or "good," as he would term it, he does not wait for an introduction, but goes and chews his pea-nuts and pop-corn by the side of any traveler near whom there is a vacant seat. If there is not a vacant seat, he scotches himself up against the arm of it.

It is one of the brakeman's privileges to get his pea-nuts and pop-corn free; he gets them on these terms from the newsboy.

The newsboy thinks it best to agree to these terms.

The brakeman is vivacious and muscular; and will ask you for a chaw of 'bacco in the most confiding way.

He has to help the conductor to eject passengers from the cars when necessary.

This is a part of his duty which he performs with alacrity, and in a masterly manner.

His practiced eye detects the recusant passenger's weak point, and his ripened judgment in an instant plans the *modus operandi* of attack.

A nervous gentleman once said that a brakeman never approached him without giving him the impression that he was taking his measure with a view to putting him off the cars.

He had once been dumped on a lonely strip of prairie-land, on the suspicion that he was a card-sharper, because he offered to bet the brakeman, in a trifling humor, that he could not pick out the knave of clubs from three cards.

The brakeman's duties on a passenger-train are not arduous.

In addition to attending to the signals of the engineer, he has to look after the stoves, as before remarked, lamps, bell-ropes, ventilators, and water-coolers. He is also required to lend a hand at wood-

ing up the tender, and loading up baggage, if necessary.

The duties of the freight brakeman are much more arduous and dangerous, the coupling and uncoupling of cars being an occupation attended with much risk to life and limb.

When I see a brakeman go between two cars to make a coupling, it seems to me that he is playing a game of "catch who can" with death.

What hands have been smashed, what arms crushed, what legs severed, and what mangled bodies have been dragged from under the wheels where brakemen have tried to couple freight cars!

Accidents from this cause go on steadily increasing with the greater number of miles in operation and the tonnage carried—just as they will continue to increase until a complete change be made, so that the coupling may be done by a lever from a platform of the car, or above, or at the side.

Many companies would adopt a coupling of this kind if others with whom they run in connection would also do so; but it would be useless for one link in a through route, over which the cars of several companies run in common, to adopt such a contrivance if other companies on the route declined.

Nothing but the compulsion of the Legislature

will bring about an improvement against which there is no practical objection except the expense.

The freight brakeman, nevertheless, becomes familiar with the danger, and thinks all men mortal but himself.

Balancing the slanting-pin in the heel of the draw-bar, he leans across the track, and as the car to be coupled approaches, supports the link in one hand. When cars come together with some force and continue their way for several yards, the brakeman coupling for a moment is out of sight; you don't know whether he is safe or not.

He may step out vigorously, crying "All right—go ahead," or the poor fellow may have ceased to speak forever.

These men are subject to many dangers in winter, when cars are covered with ice and snow. They have to climb and run along the roofs, springing in the darkness from car to car, when a false step would be instant death.

AN UNSUITABLE APPLICANT.

It was only a short time ago that a man of fifty asked to be employed as a brakeman. I remarked that he was too old, and that his back was too stiff for such work.

He was quite hurt at my disparaging allusion to

his back, and declared his back was "as good a back as mine." "He knew more about his back than I did," etc.

I then told him that if he were started as a brakeman he would certainly be killed in a week, and he could not decently come there and ask us to be at the expense of burying him.

He said he didn't want any man to bury him; he could bury himself without any of my assistance.

I then made a remark about his legs being rather slow, when he left the office highly incensed.

It is nevertheless a fact, though this would-be brakeman would not admit it, that youth and strong and active supple limbs are absolutely necessary to a brakeman.

It is no unusual thing to see a brakeman dancing a hornpipe on the top of the cars, to keep himself warm in winter, and jumping from one car to another in an unnecessary and superfluous way, his object being, perhaps, so to expend his surprising energy.

But I saw one, not very long ago, behave himself on the top of the cars in a way which could not be accounted for, even on this supposition.

He began by roundly swearing (against the rules and regulations) so that he could be heard fifty yards away. He then threw himself into a variety of contortions; and finally, taking off his coat, he planted

his hand inside his shirt, took down his suspenders, loosened his pants, stood still groping about among his linen, until finally he got what he was searching for—namely, a hot cinder.

This had escaped from the smoke-stack, and was tickling him in a way not to his fancy.

The freight brakeman is a bird of passage, not abiding long in one place, but working his way East or West, according to his disposition; and as there is a dash about him which affects the softer sex—like the glamour which the soldier casts—he often leaves behind him traces of his conquests in too loving and sometimes aching hearts.

Like the soldier,

“Hard is his work, small is his pay,
He woos and he wins, and rideth away.”

Reliable freight brakemen are frequently made conductors of freight-trains; from which occupation they rise to be conductors of passenger-trains, dépôt agents, superintendents of divisions, and even general superintendents of railroads.

THE BRAKEMAN'S STORY.

“Well, I'll tell you about the worst kind of experience I ever had in my life. It warn't any kind of a smash-up, but a sort o' flyin', swingin' business.

"I s'pose you know what a 'brakemast' is?"

"The thing with a wheel 'at top?'"

"Yes, sir, for tightening brakes.

"Well, you see sometimes this brakemast gives way, or the wheel slips off.

"A friend of mine was killed putting a brake on when the mast broke; you see, he nat'rally fell back'ard between the cars, and was run over.

"Well, on the Southby Eastern Railroad, where I began braking, there is a high trestle bridge over Black Creek—about as high a bridge as I know; and the creek lies away down below, as deep and ugly a bit of water as you'd care look down on on a darkish night.

"When I first started braking on that line, I didn't like that creek a bit, and contrived to be in the caboose at the rear when going over it. But I soon began to run across the roofs of the cars while passing over the creek, and didn't care a darn for it.

"One dark rainy night, kind of night a brakeman likes to be inside by the stove smoking his pipe—the very place where I was—suddenly the engine whistled 'on brakes.'

"I and my mate were up on the top of the cars like a streak, running along to the middle of the train.

"I had put on two or three brakes as hard as I

could, when I noticed we were right over Black Creek!

"Throwing all my heft on to the wheel I was holding, and swinging my body round with every jerk, so as to get more power on the brake, I was taking a good swing at it as a finisher, when the brakewheel came right off in my hand, and away I went backward, with a jerk that sent me flying clear over the bridge.

"The first thing I observed was my legs in the air, and the next the water below.

"Well, sir, I wanted somebody to kiss me for my mother just then, and shake hands and say good-bye, in the worst way; but I could not stop!

"What followed soon after that, I do not know; but I must have made a hole in Black Creek that took some time to fill up.

"When I got my senses back, I was lying in the caboose, feeling as if I had not had a good square meal for a month. I guess I lit on my stomach.

"No; it didn't actually kill me, but it weakened me. I don't put on brakes half as tight as I used to, leastwise not going over creeks."

CHAPTER X.

THE SWITCH AND SIGNAL TENDER.

The Switch and Signal Tender.—Accidents from misplaced Switches.
—Unaccountable Mistakes.—Heavy Responsibility of his Duties.
—A clear Head needed.—Of two Evils choose the least.—The
Switch-tender's Story.—A careless Conductor.—What came of his
Carelessness.—A fearful Dilemma.—The Choice.

BEFORE more fully referring to signals, it will be well to say something about switch and signal tenders, whose duties consist in displaying them for the direction of others, and obeying them when directed to themselves — responsible duties, and poorly paid for.

The most reliable and experienced switch-tender will occasionally make mistakes, not from negligence or inattention, but because it is human to err.

Accidents caused by misplaced switches for the last few years on the railroads of the United States alone would fill many volumes, but would not be pleasant reading.

The following extract from the correspondence of a Boston journal in reference to an accident recent

as I write this, illustrates the manner in which such casualties sometimes occur:

"One of the most successful and long-tried railroad superintendents said to me the other day that no human foresight, no long experience, and no care could relieve a train from the danger resulting from a misplaced switch.

"I had in my employ a switchman who for twenty years served the company. He was as steady as the day is long; he was religious, conscientious, and a total abstainer.

"I was standing near him one day when he turned the switch for a freight-train. He did not know that I was near.

"He turned the switch back, and it was all right for an express-train that was thundering along.

"When the whistle sounded, announcing the approach of the train, he went deliberately to the switch, turned it back, so that the lightning express would dash right into the freight-train. I yelled with all my might, "Reverse your switch."

"He sprang to the handle, reversed it, and he had not a second to spare. The train flew past with the velocity of light, and was out of sight and hearing in a moment.

"The man could give no account of his conduct. When the whistle sounded, an impulse seized him to

turn the switch, as he had an impression that it was wrong.

“‘It was not negligence, it was not inattention to duty, for he was painfully in earnest. But he was confused and paralyzed by fear, and did not know what he was doing.

“‘Such accidents are likely to occur on the best-managed roads in the world.’”

Accidents will occur from misplaced switches, without regard to the wages paid, or the steadiness, sobriety, and intelligence of the employes, simply for the reason that switchmen are human.

A very high degree of responsibility is put upon them. In the fury of incoming trains, the rapidity and often uncertainty of their movements, the responsibility felt, and the fear that they will make a mistake, often unnerve long-experienced switchmen, and throw them into confusion, so that they have not the slightest idea what they do, and accidents which are attributed to negligence and inattention to duty are the result solely of fear.

I remember standing for an hour or more one day near a great junction in one of our large Western cities where some hundreds of trains pass daily, watching the labors of a switchman who had many switches and signals under his charge.

I was amazed at the rapidity of his movements over the interlacing rails, as he adjusted the switches and directed the constant stream of trains that came along, all requiring his guiding hand.

It was a marvel to see the man, as trains and engines crowded upon him, swaying them by his levers out of each other's way, and while apparently driven to his wit's end how to marshal them, still mindful of trains not yet in sight, so that when the express train came along there was a clear width for it through the labyrinth. The man in charge of several switches should keep his head clear, and not muddle his brains with beer.

Fancy the accountability upon him as he stands bewildered in the centre of the tracks, soliloquizing.

"Let's see. Excursion-train due at 4.45, and it an't in. There's the accommodation, whistling like mad; then before that there was the mixed. No, that must have been the Blue Line freight.

"No; that was the stock-train; no, it warn't, neither—that was empties.

"This is the oil-train. I can smell it; and right in the way of the express; and dern me if I know which track she's on!"

At some stations, at which the dépôt-yard is nearly a mile long, only one switch-tender is kept. He has to go over the distance between the switches

many times a day. Such a man should have a good pair of legs, and ought to undergo a preliminary examination in this respect.

His is a hard lot, for if his corns trouble him, or if his rheumatism impedes his progress, the waiting engineer will swear at him, and perhaps squirt a little water in his ear as he goes past the engine. Exposure afflicts him with severe aches and pains.

It is astonishing what a number of mistakes even an attentive and conscientious switchman will make.

He is, perhaps, in a windy switch-box, sitting nearly on the top of the stove, trying to restore the circulation in his half frozen limbs, after having been to the top of a high semaphore or target-ladder, to relight the lamp, when suddenly a shrill scream is heard for the side-track.

Switch-tender rushes out, and, under the influence of the first idea, turns the nearest lever. He then glances toward the approaching engine, and sees he has made a mistake!

It is then too late to remedy it, for the train is right there, and a moment after a tremendous concussion takes place, accompanied too frequently by sad consequences.

The general superintendent may dismiss that man, though he may have been in the employ a number of years, and that was his first mistake.

His successor will, of course, be equally fallible. But, unless it can be proved that willful negligence contributed to the accident, it is poor policy to discharge a steady, sober switch-tender, even for a mistake that ended calamitously.

THE SWITCH-TENDER'S STORY.

"You see, sir, there is an old saying, 'Of two evils choose the least.' I have told my story a good many times, and I suppose I always begin the same way. Well, I was telling it once to a swell fellow who was a scholar, and he stopped me right at the outset by saying, 'Bad grammar, switch-tender; bad grammar!'

"Bad what?" I said.

"'Bad grammar,' he said. 'You see you should never say hof two hevils choose the *least*; *least* is sooperlative, and hin comparing two things you should use the comparative, and the word in this case is *less*. Hof two hevils, choose the *less*.'

"Well," I said; "if you like grammar better than my story, all right. I won't tell it."

"'Now, don't be a blarsted fool, switchman,' says the Hinglishman—for he was a John Bull; 'go hon with your story, and blarst the grammar.'

"Hall right," I said. and I told him what I'm going to tell you :

"I need not say this is a small way-station; you can see it is, if you look round. We've only got one small side-track, enough to hold two short trains.



THE SWITCHMAN AND THE ENGLISHMAN.

"That's about all we want here, and no room left over.

"You see the mixed freight-train used to come in at 9 P.M., and the way-passenger at 9.10, both bound East, and at 9.40 the lightning express East passed them both right here.

"The way-freight was sometimes late, and then we had to move quick to get both trains snug in the side-track, out of the way of the express.

"We hadn't these target signals then, which I can kick up five hundred yards off to stop a train, if it isn't all right for her to come in; and as we are on the bend of a curve, trains used to come right in without much warning.

"Well, on the night I'm speaking about, the mixed was on time, and took her place at the west end of side-track, leaving room for the way-passenger to back in at the east end, so she could follow straight out without any backing up after the lightning express was gone.

"That was the way they always worked.

"Well, the way came in about twenty minutes late, ten minutes ahead of the time of the lightning express.

"Jim Williams, the conductor, jumped off just opposite my switch-box, and, says he, 'The lightning's about forty minutes late, and I guess I'll just go and get a bite o' somethin', for I'm powerful hungry; it'll be time eno' to switch her when I come back;' and off he went to get his tea.

"When he had gone, I did not half like it—leaving the way on the main-track, although he said the lightning was forty minutes late; so I went up to

the engine to ask the engineer to take the side-track, but he had gone to tea, too; and the fireman said he would not move: it was all right, the express was forty minutes late.

"As I went by the rear car, which was full of passengers, I thought I'd get my wife and boy out to stay in the switch-box until the way-passenger was ready to quit; for they were going a bit along the road that night to visit some friends. But my little Sammy was asleep in his mother's lap, bless him! so I left 'em where they was.

"Still, somehow, I didn't half like leaving the way on the main-track on the time of the express. I had only Jim Williams's word for it that she was forty minutes late.

"You see we had no telegraph here. Besides, it was agin the rules.

"I looked anxious toward the shanty where Jim and the engineer were getting their tea. I wished they'd just come right along and take that train into the side-track, but they didn't come; and the thought of what might happen if they didn't come mighty soon made me sweat, although it was a cold night.

"Well, I'd worked myself up to some state, when I thought I heerd a kind of rumbling, but directly after I could not hear it. I had some idee of run-

ing as far as I could with my lamp to stop the express; but if I did stop her, I knew Jim Williams would be discharged; and if Jim came out and switched his train off while I was away, stopping the express without cause, I should lose my place. So I stopped right at the switch, with one eye on the light in the shanty window, and another up the track. I have wished ever since that I had done as I was a mind to; but it's no use wishing now.

"I was just wondering why them fellows took such a heap o' time over their tea, and thinking Jim must have been powerful hungry, when I heerd a sound as made my blood run cold. She was coming, and no mistake! and so quiet, the night being kind o' heavy, that when I noticed her round the curve she was right on to us, so to speak.

"Same time I saw a light along the road from the shanty—Jim and the engineer coming at last. They got on the track and were walking down quiet toward their train, and didn't seem to hear what I heard.

"I ran up the track, shouting to look out for the lightning, and then back again to this switch, and when I got here I hadn't much time to think. She was about two hundred yards off, and running like mad to make up time.

"What was I to do?

"The switch was standing for the side-track, so that the lightning would run into the mixed.

"I turned it convulsively for the main line.

"She was getting nearer.

"I thought of my wife and boy, and again turned it for the side-track.

"Terror-stricken, I turned it again, and was reversing it once more, when I was struck with a heavy blow and knocked up against this switch-box senseless.

"They found me there, and when they threw water on me and brought me round, I heard an awful crash—the collision that had occurred half an hour before.

"You may say that's strange, but it's true.

"The first faces I saw were my wife's and boy's bending over me, and holding up my shattered arm.

"Then I thanked God that the crowd of passengers in the rear car of the way were not killed.

"There were oil cars on the mixed. After the collision they took fire, and the train was burned up.

"The engineer of the lightning jumped; he it was as knocked me up agin the switch-box.

"The fireman jumped too, and they were both badly hurt, but came round all right in time.

"The bodies of Jim and the engineer were found

on the track. They must have stumbled and been run over by the express.

"But the queerest thing of all was, when the directors examined into it, they donated me a hundred dollars, and paid my wages till I was able to switch again, which, you see, I can do very well with my stiffened arm.

"Perhaps they thought that of two evils I had done the least, or the *less*, as that blarsted Hinglishman says."

CHAPTER XI.

SIGNALS.

Signals. — Calling for Brakes. — “Off Brakes.” — “Back up.” — A complicated Circular. — Arm Signals. — Flags. — The Telegraph Target, and its Object. — Communication between Train-men and Engineer. — An extraordinary Device. — “Semaphore” Signals. — Switch Targets. — Accident Signals. — Some useful Suggestions and otherwise. — Signaling reduced to a Science. — Still Room for Improvement. — Freight-car Coupling. — A good one still a Desideratum. — Perfection in Passenger-car Couplers.

If the traveler can not sleep easily in the sleeping-cars, it will amuse him to be able to translate the meanings of the different snortings of the iron horse. They are guides to the blind, not to mention the deaf.

These signals generally come upon the ear, however, when you are trying to sleep, and effectually prevent it.

For instance, you are just dozing away, and hoping that you will not awake until you are called by the sleeping-car conductor, when there comes a quick single screech.

You jump up, and have a sort of feeling that your hair is doing likewise.

But that single screech simply means, "Put on brakes."

Two yells immediately after mean, "Let them go again."

Another screech, "Put them on again." And two more screeches, "Let them go again," and so on.

Some engineers are fond of having the brakes put on and off, probably actuated by a desire to keep the brakemen occupied about their business.

If the whistle should snort *three* times, it means "Look out—backing up."

Three long snorts, when approaching a station, mean "Side-track."

A number of short, sharp toots means that cattle are on the track.

On some of the roads the art of whistling is carried to perfection.

The following circular, issued by the general superintendent of a Western road, illustrates what I mean :

"*To, all Employés.* — Engineers in approaching Parsons will indicate 'down brakes' by seventeen whistles; 'up brakes' by thirty-two whistles; 'back up,' forty whistles and two snorts. In case of doubt, whistle like the d—l. At street-crossings,

whistle considerably, and ring the bell. Always whistle before dinner. Require the fireman to keep the whistle-valve open during dinner. After dinner whistle and squirt water, then back up, squirt a little, then go ahead with a whistle, a squirt, and a ring. This order will be rigidly enforced."

The above comprise nearly all the signals that are relied upon from the locomotive whistle.

When the conductor gives a signal by stretching his right arm and hand at a right angle to his body, he means "Go ahead;" the signal to start at night being usually given by the conductor swinging a lantern over his head. This action requires practice and some confidence, because if it be done nervously, you may likely knock your hat off, or spill the oil down your neck.

When the conductor stretches both arms at right angles to his body, he means "Stop."

A red flag by day or a red light by night waved upon the track also signifies "Stop."

When the conductor moves his right hand and arm slowly downward toward the track, he does not mean that the train should come to a *full stop*, but a sort of *semicolon*—to move cautiously, in fact.

Waving the arm from the body, or moving a lamp up and down toward the tracks, means to "Back up."

The signal "Danger" is given by any violent action on the track, such as the waving of a hat, or contorting the body in any maniacal way calculated to attract attention.

Many engineers have been brought to a full stop by the wavings of umbrellas by ladies in newly-settled districts, who merely wanted to inquire the price of hen-fruit farther east.

The signals given by the locomotive whistle are applicable also to the bell-rope; one stroke of the gong in the engine-cab signifying "Stop;" two, "Go ahead;" three, "Back;" etc.

This communication between conductor and engineer frequently obviates inconvenience and accident.

Travelers may have noticed a red flag sticking in a hole in the platform, or a little red target outside the telegraph office.

Both these signals inform the engineer of the train approaching that telegraph orders are awaiting him, and will not be taken down until the engineer and conductor are made cognizant of the orders.

It is strange that intercommunication between the engineer and "guard," as the conductor is called in Europe, has not yet been perfected. The simple American rope is too simple for English officials.

Their ideas of perfection are connected with complications; and unless the communication be de-



THE YOUNG WOMAN WHO STOPPED THE TRAIN.



pendent upon the action of a dummy-engine and intricate mechanical gearing, it could not be hoped that such a device would be welcomed.

I remember an attempt was made on the Chemin de Fer du M—— to establish communication between passengers and the *garde*.

It operated as follows:

A diamond-shaped pane of glass was let into the upholstery on both sides of the partition across the car.

The first instruction was to break this pane of glass with your elbow. In doing this, you might cut yourself.

The glass being broken, a sort of bell-pull was disclosed. You were instructed to pull that "with all your might," then to rush to the right-hand side of the train (in the direction the train was going), to lean out of the window, and wave your arm.

A gentleman who had occasion to test the practicability of this contrivance never lived to test the practicability of another; for, in his frantic endeavors to attract the attention of the *garde* as above directed, his head was knocked off by a stone wall.

Very few people try to communicate with the *garde* on that line now.

On some well managed lines, high "semaphores," or "targets," are erected at the extremities of dé-



THE SEMAPHORE, OR
TARGET.

pôt-yards to signal coming trains when the yard is clear.

If all is right for a train to come in, the target stands as in illustration: the movable arm being at an angle of 45° , and the light at night white or green, signifying "All right."

If the yard is not clear for the train, then the arm is raised to an angle of 90° , and the light is red, signifying "Stop."

On some railroads, instead of the high "semaphore" or "target" signal, a large wicker ball, painted red, is used.

When the track is not clear for a train to come in, this ball is hoisted by a rope to the top of a high mast; when it is necessary to approach cautiously, it is lowered half-way; and when the track is clear, the ball is lowered out of view.

The switch-signal is a red-painted target in the day-time, and a red light at night.

When the main track is unbroken, and the sidings are isolated from it, the edge only of the target is seen in day-time, and at night a white or green light.

"Blind" switches, as might be expected, have *no*

lights, and these blind signals are the causes of numerous accidents.

In the day-time they are some guide, to be sure; but in the darkness one can never tell how they are set until he walks up within a foot of them and gazes at them, or lies down and gropes with his hand to find the direction of the rails.

ACCIDENT SIGNALS.

A great deal of consideration has been given to the subject of railroad signals, and an extraordinary crop of suggestions and inventions is the result of every new accident.

.When, on account of a broken rail, wheel, or axle, the falling of a brake-shoe, or other cause, cars are thrown off the track, and the train is brought to a stand-still and blocks the road, the first thing to do is to warn trains behind.

At such a time every moment is precious, and the least lack of promptitude may cause a disastrous collision.

If it is in day-time, a brakeman will be sent back with a red flag eight hundred yards, or at night with a lamp, to warn and stop approaching trains, laying down torpedoes, if foggy and he can not be seen.

There not being time for this in some cases, when trains are following each other closely, a sapient in-

ventor suggests that the conductor of every train should carry with him a supply of sky-rockets, which he may let off at a moment's notice.

Another, improving on the idea, suggests that a cannon should be kept on board, the discharge of which would be heard at considerable distance.

Another suggests that the caboose at the rear should be a steam-car, driven by a small independent engine with its own water-tank and fuel, so that in the event of an accident it could at once run back, at thirty miles an hour, to warn approaching trains; and after having gone a mile or more, return, dropping Roman candles on the track, discharging sky-rockets, and letting off a cannon from time to time. The inventor thinks these precautions would be effective as night-signals.

It being observed by another inventor that much destruction of property was caused by the inability of train-men to stop a train at once in the event of the breakage of a wheel, truck, axle, etc., he proposed that the first car of every train should be loaded with bags of sand; their weight in such a position, he said, gave impetus to the train; and, therefore, when carried back to the rear by train-men in the event of accident, would correspondingly retard its progress—in fact, stop it. This man must have been a lunatic.

Another inventor proposed that a huge anchor,

such as used by ships at sea, should be kept on the platform, securely fastened to the end of the last car of every train, in order to be thrown out at once when necessary.

He said it would claw hold of the ties, and not give an inch, holding on so fast that the train would not only stop at once, but begin to run back right off. I think I see it claw.

The following is part of the system of signals recently put into practice on some Eastern roads:

"The constant use of the ordinary telegraph, by means of which the arrival and departure of every train is reported from all the principal stations instantly to the head office. The superintendent can thus know the position of every train along the entire line at any moment.

"Every train engineer is also informed of the position of the train which immediately precedes his. This is done by means of signal-flags and lights, which are operated by every passing train.

"The instant a train passes one of the signal-stations, which are perhaps a mile apart, a red flag or disk appears, and continues until the train has passed the next signal-station; and every train is required to stop five minutes unless the red flag, or light by night, has disappeared; and after five minutes to proceed very slowly, with an extra lookout.

"Another part of this signaling apparatus, which is quite important, is the notice which a coming train gives the dépôt-man of its approach. About a mile from the station, every approaching train sets a bell ringing in the dépôt, which is continued until the arrival of the train."

Thus every thing seems to be done to insure safety from collision.

The steam and air brakes acting on the whole of the cars at once and under control of the engineer—now successfully applied, and in use on many well-equipped roads—are among the best and most valuable inventions of modern times, having for their object the better control of trains running at high rates of speed. Still, they are not all that is wanted.

The brake required, and which will no doubt be contrived, is one that will not be dependent on the engine for steam or for exhausting or compressing air, by which the engineer may apply resistance to all his train at once, and yet not take it out of the hands of train-men—quickly applied and quickly withdrawn, and equally as available without an engine as with it.

FREIGHT-CAR COUPLING.

Probably nothing has attracted so much attention from men who fancy they have an inventive turn of mind, as the freight-car coupler.

Almost every railroad-man has seen hundreds of models of improved freight-car couplers. There is the "Automatic coupler," the "self-acting freight-car coupler," the "independent freight-car coupler," the "hook-and-eye freight-car coupler," the "union freight-car coupler," the "side-lever freight-car coupler," the "mechanical freight-car coupler," the "drop-pin freight-car coupler," the "push-link freight-car coupler," the "self-connecting draw-iron freight-car coupler," the "joint link and pin self-acting freight-car coupler," the "vertical freight-car coupler," the "horizontal lever freight-car coupler," the "Smith self-acting freight-car coupler," the "Brown self-acting freight-car coupler," the "Jones self-acting freight-car coupler," the "Robinson self-acting freight-car coupler," etc., etc.

All these devices had the same object, namely, to do away with the necessity of coupling cars by hand—a fruitful source of fatal accident.

Very few of such devices have any practical value. Some will couple if cars are brought slowly together; some require considerable force; some will work in summer and not in winter, when clogged with snow or ice; and most of them require such exact conditions that they are useless in practice.

A recent writer on this subject remarks that if the records of the Patent Bureau were examined,

the number of patents that have been issued for car-coupling devices would probably be found to reach five hundred. So far as the mechanical requirements of an effective coupler are concerned, no problem is apparently more simple. A vertical pin dropped through or lifted out of a horizontal link, or a pair of hooks that can be connected or disengaged as may be required without sandwiching a human body between the cars, to be caught and crushed like an insect between the upper and nether millstone—this would seem to be about all there is of it.

And yet, if the five hundred devices, more or less, were collected together for inspection by a committee of the most competent railroad mechanics, it is doubtful if a single one could be selected and unanimously approved as combining all the conditions required for its safe and practical working as a coupler.

Either the ingenuity of our inventors and the skilled mechanical intelligence of the country are incapable of mastering the problem, or our railway operators do not take interest enough in the matter to determine which is the best of these numerous devices, and adopt them in place of the bungling contrivances by which so many lives are sacrificed.

Some of these inventions have real merit, but are unappreciated, from sheer inability on the part of railroad-men to test and examine them in detail;

and it seems to us that some organized plan might be devised with special reference to couplers, so that the merits of each and every invention could be definitely and authoritatively settled, thus relieving an army of patentees of the misery of suspense, and enabling railroads to avail themselves of the best apparatus thus discovered.

It is high time that some steps were taken to lessen the number of shocking casualties from car-coupling which are recorded with such monotonous frequency in the daily newspapers. If the railroads will take no concerted action in the matter, then it will be the duty of the State Legislatures to compel railroad corporations to make use of better and safer methods of coupling cars than many of them now do. This would, of course, be attended with some expense and inconvenience, but it would save the lives of hundreds of railroad employés.

Whenever a man is observed going into a general superintendent's office with a long narrow box under his arm, or something of the same shape wrapped up in a handkerchief, it may be safely predicted that he is the inventor of an improved, self-acting, automatic, mechanical, independent freight-car coupler, which is utterly useless.

The name of such inventors is legion, and yet almost nothing practical has been done in the direction

aimed at. The primitive link and pin still continue; and hands and arms are smashed, and men crushed and killed in the same certain proportion to the aggregate tonnage hauled by railroads. So that there is still a fine opening for inventive genius to produce a self-acting freight-car coupler.

The passenger-car coupler now getting into general use leaves little to be desired; the "Miller coupling" being almost as perfect as such appliances can be made.

Many years passed, and many trials were made before this invention was so much improved upon as to recommend itself to general superintendents. This excellent contrivance has been proved to be of inestimable service, not only rendering less possible the occurrence of accidents resulting in loss of life to passengers, holding as it does the whole train together with a firmness never obtained before, with the requisite degree of elasticity, but also in affording a safe and easy unbroken platform walk from one end of the train to the other.

Perhaps the much-wanted freight-car coupler will follow in the early future. Let us hope it may.

CHAPTER XII.

THE TIME-CARD.

The Time-card.—Who makes it.—Specimen Diagram Time-table.—How Train-times are arranged.—Many Considerations to be taken into account.—Time-table Humor.—Comments on Time-cards.—The Fun to be found in some.—Specimen of Time-card on the Model of those found in certain Guides.—Extraordinary Trains.—Working Time-card.

PEOPLE wonder who the genius is who makes the time-card.

He is not, as some suppose, a brother of the individual who makes the almanacs, keeps track of the sun, moon, and stars—their setting and rising, apogees and perigees, transits and eclipses, etc.; nor is he of necessity a relative of the useful arithmetician who calculates insurance tables, logarithm tables, or those other statistical statements exhibiting what number of mortals must certainly succumb in a certain time, as safe as eggs.

Query: Who is the man who makes the time-tables?

Answer: John Smith, the general superintendent, assistant or division superintendent.

The passenger who possesses a "working" time-card may amuse himself by attempting to find out whether the particular train he is on has all its meeting and passing places with other trains shown, or whether, by an oversight of Mr. Smith, it may not possibly meet another of the same class at the rate of forty miles an hour at some inconvenient place between stations on the same track.

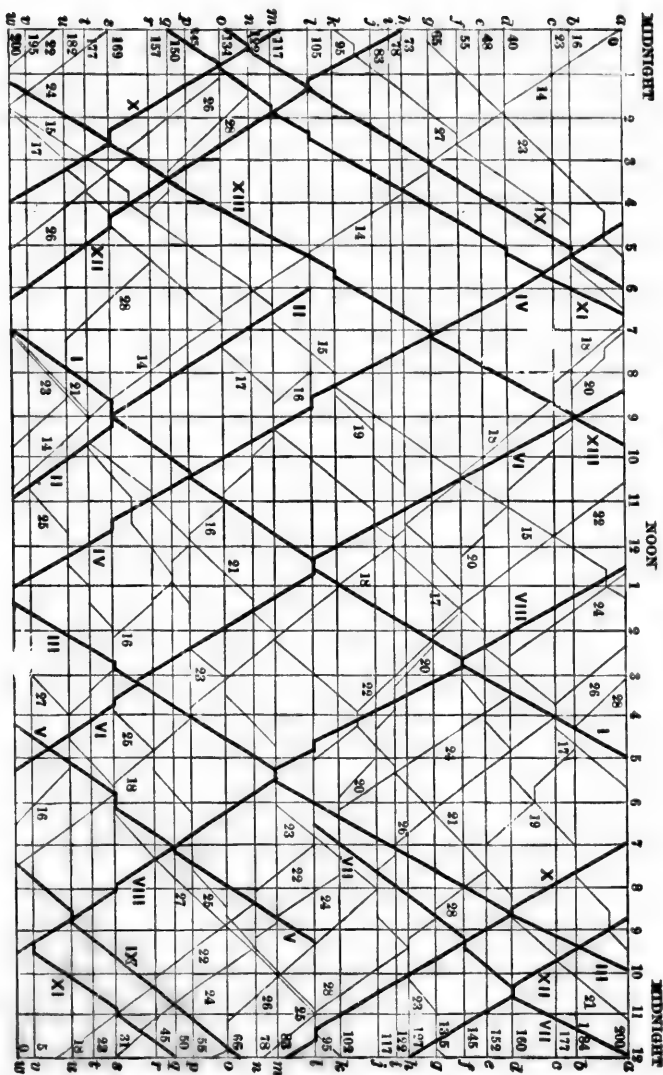
This is an absorbing amusement; but, as a matter of fact, there is scarcely, if ever, a mistake in a working time-card.

In order to more clearly explain the mode in which time-cards are made for single-track railroads, an exemplar is appended of what is called a "Diagram Board," on which all the regular time-card trains running on one day are shown.

It will be observed that the diagram is drawn on a mathematical scale as regards the distances between stations, and that the hours range from midnight to noon from the left to the middle of the board, and from noon to midnight from the middle to the right of the board; displaying by lines the hours, so that the relative speed of trains is seen at a glance by their passage from left to right through the hours and by the stations.

The trains are first arranged on the diagram one by one, and after the whole of the train arrangements

DIAGRAM TIME TABLE



are completed on the board, the figures are copied off, and set up into type. Wherever the lines cross, of course trains meet or pass.

No one who has not done this work can form an adequate idea of the varied and peculiar knowledge necessary.

Trains are by no means run at an average rate of speed.

The effect of grades upon different classes of trains, the number of stopping-places on the journey, the time necessary for such stoppages, whether for refreshments, fuel, water, changing engines, examining wheels and trucks of cars; whether day or night trains (more time being necessary for night trains, when passing through station yards, and by other stations at which they are not timed to stop), connections to be made with branch line trains, probabilities of being able to start on time from termini, the varying positions of fuel stations according to the arrangements of the fuel department, etc., etc.—all these exigencies have to be taken into consideration; and the neglect of one of them is often enough to destroy the whole symmetry of a diagram approaching completion.

In considering these essentials, the compiler is bound down to certain times of arrival and departure of the express passenger-trains; and he must make

his intermediate times fit in with the requirements of other trains as best he can, no matter what these intermediate difficulties may be; while the best that can be done must be done for stock and other important trains.

He must arrange to start trains from a certain place at a certain time, and arrange for their arrival at the minute required; for the terminal times are arranged by agreement between the general superintendents of the lines in competition between certain points, at conventions held for the consideration of running schedules.

TIME-TABLE HUMOR.

Perhaps in no country in the world are railroad time-cards issued in greater profusion and variety, for the guidance and misguidance of the public, than in the United States.

The "Traveler's Official," "Appleton's," and "Rand & M'Nally's" are all good guides—the "Travelers" very good. The student who gnashes his teeth and rends his garments over Bradshaw's chaos of figures, lines, asterisks, braces, paragraphs, and general jumble of reference marks, finds sweet relief in the simplicity of such a guide as the "Travelers'," as well as reliable information, as a general thing.

But what must be said of those fly-sheets some-

times issued by the passenger agents of railroads, but more frequently by enterprising geniuses who publish time-cards, not for the sake of the time-cards, but for the sake of advertisements of Smith's dry goods, Brown's barber-shop, Jones's saloon, and Robinson's superior chewing tobacco, printed on the back?

These are the leaves which deck the floors and tables of our hotels, thick as those in Vallambrosa.

Young Tomkins consulted one of these delusive time cards, and missed the cars which should have borne him to his bride.

"Oh, Deceit!" he cried, "thy name is Time-cards! Blarsted hopes, and Anner Mariar!"

Those persons who have been driven to despair by such time-cards would not believe that they conceal a large amount of fun: it all depends upon how you look at them.

The man who compiled the following was a good hand. Bradshaw is bewildering; so is this, and something more. It beats Bradshaw.

Let us look it over. You see the words "Going East;" you presume you are looking at East-bound trains. Not at all. If you scan the figures closely, you will see that the prevailing tendency of the trains is toward the West.



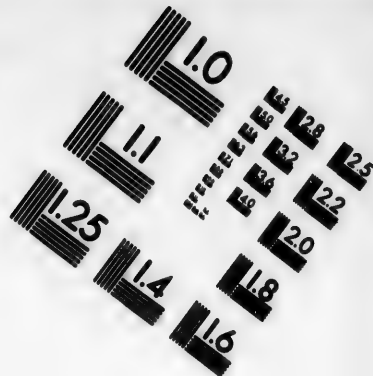
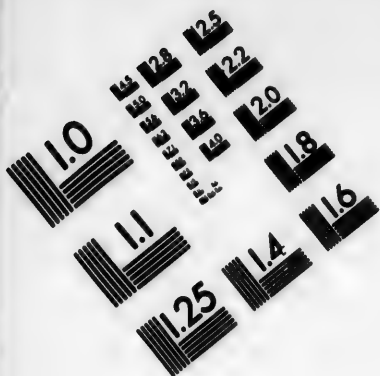
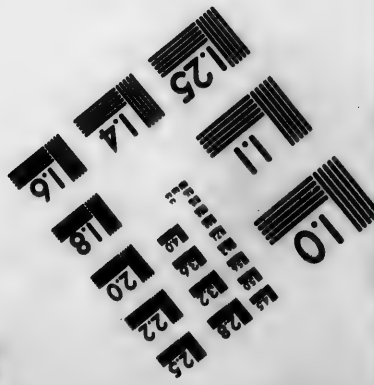
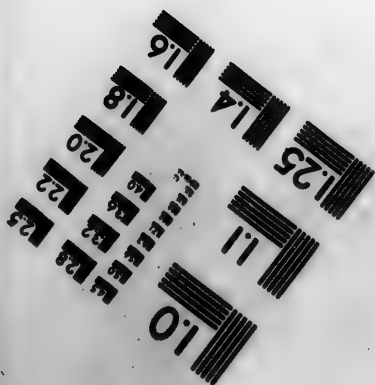
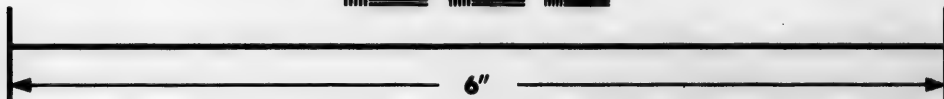
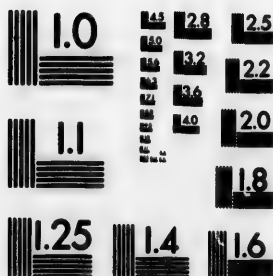


IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (MT-3)



Photographic Sciences Corporation

**23 WEST MAIN STREET
WEBSTER, N.Y. 14580
(716) 872-4503**



[illegible]

[illegible]

This "Mixed" train runs through to Chicago, which is more than the "Morning Express" does in

the next column. Can the figures have slipped? Or is the "Mixed" timed to run into the "Morning Express," as a regular thing, at Z——?

The "Morning Express" has the peculiar habit of arriving at E—— fifteen minutes after it departs from that place—a retrogression which seems to be neither necessary nor funny. It does the same thing at other places. It departs first and arrives at the same place afterward.

In the next column is the "Pacific Express," which, it is stated, runs on the Sabbath. This train begins well, stopping and starting in an orderly manner; but soon becomes eccentric, and flies past stations, arriving at some but not departing, departing from others and not arriving, and finally finds its fate, at no time at all, in the gloomy confines of A.M.'s and P.M.'s.

In the next column the information is given that Sunday is not Monday. Much obliged. We are also told that Monday is not Friday, and in the next column that Monday is not Saturday. This is very useful; probably Monday is Tuesday.

The "Emigrant Express" arrives at the minutes first and hours afterward; for instance, at C—— 57.7, probably meaning that it runs there in 57 minutes, and lies there 7 hours. It goes to the next station in 25 minutes and stays there 9 hours, and so on.

But the worst feature is that it reaches V—— at the decimal time of 00.3. Can it mean 3 o'clock, and short of W——, where dinner is intimated? But the emigrants never get there. They see the dinner-station; but, like Moses on Pisgah, they view the Promised Land from a vexatious distance. Emigrants suffer many privations.

The "Steamboat" and Chicago Express leave New York one hour and Boston one hour and a half apart. When they get to A—— they are 3 hours 25 minutes from each other, and reach E—— with 3 hours 55 minutes between them.

But here the Steamboat Express waits until the Chicago Express comes along, while the Chicago Express waits 8 hours 15 minutes. The engineers and conductors "learn to labor and to wait;" or perhaps they live at E——, and go home and sleep there. But it certainly would be more convenient for the public if, when the "Steamboat" Express reaches E—— at 10.50, it would take breath and proceed at 11, the time of the "Chicago Express," and the latter train, on arriving at 2.45, could go on as the "Steamboat Express" at 2.55. Strange the company never saw this. Perhaps they will say that it was a mistake in the time-table; but that won't do.

On the other side of the time-sheet we are told to "Read down:" same old joke; can not do it. We

read "up," and find, instead of going West, the current of the trains is, like Professor Wise's air current, toward the East.

It seems to be characteristic of the local "Mixed" and "Way" trains, that they run from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The "O—— Accom." does so; but the Atlantic Express (Sabbaths included) does not.

The next train, "Z—— Mixed," we are told to try weekly. This train does not start from Z——, as one might suppose it would, but from Y——; and how it leaps the chasm between O—— and Boston is not stated. The jump is rather a long one—624 miles.

We are told that the "Day Express" is not daily—is it nightly? Why say it is, and then it isn't? Probably intended for another joke.

Still, this train seems to be more reliable than some others. It actually starts, goes well for over two hundred miles, and there it vanishes; it arrives somewhere in the A.M., but nobody knows where.

We are told in the next column a little more about the names of the days of the week: that Friday is not Saturday, Saturday not Sunday. This is useful and entertaining.

The next train is a singular one. It starts from P.M. in the West and runs to A.M. in the East, not stopping at such places as Chicago, Boston, and New

York. It is specially stated that it makes the stops of Night Express on Saturday night; it is also stated that the Night Express "does not stop." If it does not stop, what becomes of the passengers? (probably no passengers on that train), and what becomes of the New York Express on Saturday night?

These two trains appear to be those on which the companies carry travelers free, if the word "Pass" stands for any thing at the head of the column.

No trains go to K——, but then none leave, so it is all right. The man who made the time-card knew what he was about. He knew if he made any trains arrive there, they would have to depart again, causing no end of trouble.

WORKING TIME-CARD.

The working time-card provides only for regular trains, the minimum number generally necessary for the business.

But it must be remembered that lines of importance run many extra trains every day, as the traffic arises.

The working time-card, therefore, is only a basis of running; and even if there were no specials, it would be too much to expect, in the nature of things, that a working time-card of a large railroad could be exactly followed by all the trains for a single day.

If one train gets off its time-card time, others are necessarily affected; while numerous special trains, even in the absence of accidents, unless their movements are directed with consummate skill, still further tend to remove regular trains from the working time-card basis of running.

Hence arises the occupation of the Telegraph Train Dispatcher!

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TELEGRAPH TRAIN DISPATCHER.

The Train Dispatcher.—How he watches the running of Trains.—Different System of running Arrangements.—The "Rights of Trains."—"Holding" Orders.—The heavy Responsibilities of the Dispatcher.—Hard to please every body.—Specimen of Telegraph Train Order.—Designations of Trains.—Rather mixed.

To the uninitiated it is a mystery how so many trains are safely passed by each other in a single day on one track.

If those irritable travelers who always find something to find fault with could only know what ingenuity and vigilance are required and exercised to prevent the trains they travel by from being delayed, their criticisms might sometimes be different.

It is a common thing to hear a fretful traveler exclaim,

"Why ever don't these kears start?"

If they started when this passenger wanted, perhaps he would be reduced to his chemical constituents in a minute or two, when the train got under headway.

But he does not think of that.

How few people think, when they step into the sleeping-car at night, and find themselves two hundred and fifty miles away on their journey by daylight, that all that time their train was being watched by an eye that durst not sleep, and that a little error that might occur twenty times a day in a commercial house without causing the slightest trouble would, if made by the telegraph train dispatcher, have resulted in calamity!

As I said before, it is when trains get behind card-time, or in the case of specials, that the train dispatcher's services come into requisition.

To special or extra trains he gives orders to run, keeping clear of regular trains.

By the system of dispatching, trains are divided into two or more classes, making passenger-trains first-class; and others, such as freight, stock, or mixed, of an inferior class; and these trains of an inferior class must keep out of the way of passenger-trains, even though passenger-trains should fall behind their card-time.

The systems of running arrangements are almost as varied as the lines are numerous; but all strive for the same object, and must, of necessity, resemble each other in principles; and it is these principles which will be found most interesting.

On most of the American and Canadian railroads,

passenger-trains run on their card-time regardless of any other description of train, but must not go beyond their crossing points with other passenger-trains without special authority; but on some lines, the trains going in one direction have the right to the road over trains going in the opposite direction.

For instance, supposing the trains going West have right of road over those going East, trains going East must not encroach on the time of West-bound trains, but must either wait for them, or claim the dispatcher's attention; who can, by issuing an order to the West-bound train to wait at a certain point, either for a limited time or indefinitely, forward the East-bound train, and thus frequently avoid serious delay to both.

The thing is, to secure the train having right to road before allowing the other to proceed.

Each dispatcher's section is from fifty to one hundred miles in length, according to the number of trains running, difficulty of working, etc.; and where continual day and night work is required, there are generally three dispatchers to each section, who work eight hours alternately.

Where the work is heavy, this is as long a time as a man can efficiently attend to it.

Where there are many trains running, interruptions and delays are frequent.

Engines and cars may and do break down and block the road; and when such blocks are serious and of long duration, all trains become more or less disarranged. Then the dispatchers' hands are full, and more than full, in getting them right.

To perform his work thoroughly the train dispatcher's mind requires to be ever vigilant, carefully planning to avoid delays, and seizing every opportunity of pushing trains rapidly and safely over the road.

At some points he must "hold" trains, that he may be enabled to send others forward; and at other points he must withdraw or cancel "holding orders," to avoid unnecessary delays.

No railway employé has more continual responsibility in his hands. His work is one constant struggle against delay and accident, and occasionally he has to supply intelligence as well as running orders to train-men.

When two trains going in opposite directions are at stations ten miles apart, it is perfectly plain that one must suffer delay, and that the community on that one will abuse the railroad.

A false calculation which delays an express-train twenty minutes puts a hundred and fifty passengers out of temper, who remember one fault and forget fifty virtues.

After ill humor is once generated, the car is too warm or too cold; the conductor too familiar or too formal; the brakemen indolent, if not worse; the newsboys pertinacious, solicitous beyond endurance; and the general superintendent no man for his place.

Then the conductor, as the most available victim, is deluged with all sorts of questions about connections, speed, and time; and he, having a hundred other things to think of, perhaps answers abruptly, and destroys in a moment the good reputation he has been struggling for hours to maintain.

It is a pity the supply of men with angelic tempers for railway positions is not adequate to the demand.

There are many difficulties and intricate positions constantly arising for the dispatcher to solve, and his solution must be sent in not later than—at once! And these solutions must be strictly correct.

Neither can the telegraph dispatcher please the train-men.

Every conductor wants his own train to get the preference.

When conductor of No. 54 freight gets to the train dispatching office, he pokes his head in at the window, and cries out wrathfully,

"Why did you fellows let No. 202 special get ahead of me? Hadn't I been long eno' on the road to-day?"

"No. 202 had stock on, and you hadn't," is the reply.

"Yes; you think more of cattle than you do of us," rejoins the conductor.

The dispatcher had all the trains under his care. The conductor had only his own.

The following is a specimen of a train dispatcher's order:

X. Y. C. RAILROAD.

Telegraph Train Order.

From —, to CONDUCTOR BROWN, and ENGINEER JONES, of No. 14, Ex. Train, at — Station.

April 14th, 1873.

Meet No. 13 Exp. at M—. No. 216 Spl. left G— 12 o'ck., and runs to D— ahead of you. Flag No. 218 Spl. to G— 31.

Recd. at 12.10 M., by F—,

Receiving Operator.

(Signed)

A. B. C.

Train Dispatcher.

[See other side.]

On the back of the order are the following instructions:

"Conductors must not receive this order unless it is indorsed on this side by the Receiving Operator for the Train Dispatcher, with the Train Dispatcher's initials, and signed by '9.'

"This order must be read aloud by the Conductor to the Engineer, and fully understood by both of them before starting; it must then be handed to the Engineer, who must hand it to his Locomotive Foreman at the end of the trip.

X. Y. C.

"Genl. Supt."

The figures "31" mean "do you understand?" "9" is the train dispatcher's abbreviation, and means that the order is completed, every body concerned understands, and that it is all correct, or "O.K."

The conductor acknowledges this order in this way: "32" (meaning "I understand") "to meet No. 13 Ex. at M——. No. 216 left G—— 12 o'clock, and runs to D—— ahead of me, and to flag No. 218 special to G——."

It would be difficult to describe in a comprehensive way—and it is doubtful whether such a description would be interesting—all the minutiae of the train dispatcher's operations.

No one who has not been a train dispatcher on a crowded single-track railroad can understand what a strain such duties are upon the mind, nor what a moment of anxiety it is when, fearful lest in the multiplicity of arrangements he may have forgotten one essential order, he scans his record-book. When he

finds the order there, his sigh of relief sounds like "God be thanked, it's all O.K."

On some railroads, dispatchers do not designate trains by their numbers or names, "Express," "Accommodation," "Way," "Through," etc., but by the names of their engines.



THE TRAIN DISPATCHER.

A train dispatcher started up from his instrument recently, remarking that he guessed things had got pretty mixed, and he'd like to be relieved by the next hand.

At W—— "Catamount" had jumped the track; "Zebra" was stalled on the grade outside the yard; "Hippopotamus" was out of water; "Snorter" had blown off a steam-chest cover; "Snake" could not crawl up the slippery rails; "Fly" had burst a flue;

"Dragon" could not drag on her cars; "Thunder" and "Lightning" coming East, and "Whirlwind" and "Chaos" West, were making big licks for the dépôt; and he guessed old Dan and Jack would have to be mighty spry with the switches, or some cow-catchers might get hurt.

In the arrangements the dispatcher makes, he takes into consideration the side-track accommodations at various points, so as not to get more trains there than he can get out again without delay; makes allowance for the weight of trains, the different powers of their respective engines, the state of the rails—whether slippery or not—grades, and all local peculiarities; keeps himself informed moment after moment, for the trains are moving all the time, and changing their relative position in regard to each other; prevents delays to all, while giving especial attention to the most important. With his fingers upon the telegraph-key, he sends his orders every instant through the wires; and, having twenty or thirty trains in his guiding hands at once, stands, not like Benjamin Franklin with his kite, but more like twenty or thirty Benjamin Franklins rolled into one.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE GENERAL SUPERINTENDENT.

The General Superintendent. — What devolves on him. — A busy Man. — How his Work begins. — His Visitors. — Office-seekers' Assiduity. — How the G. S. gets through his Correspondence. — Short-hand and its uses. — Some People's Style of Dictation. — The Stock Shipper's Claim. — Applications for Passes. — The comic, the pathetic, the business Style. — Editorial Compliments and Abuse. — The sentimental and the disinterested Applicant. — Dismissal. — Conclusion.

In the foregoing pages I have referred to a few only of those subordinate employés on railroads whose duties more closely concern travelers. I should not here refer to the general superintendent, if the omission of that functionary would not seem to imply that he were considered of less importance than a switch-man.

On the contrary, there are few occupations in life that call for such varied abilities, or are accompanied by such work and responsibility, as that of the general superintendent of a large American railroad.

On him devolves the charge of those manifold operations by which net revenue is obtained; his constant struggle being to keep the earnings up and the

expenses down. He is as busy a man as can be imagined. Let us follow him through a day.

It frequently begins at 1 A.M., when the knock of the night watchman rudely disturbs his slumbers. A telegram? Perhaps seven or eight of them. The rain has badly washed the track in some places; or a bridge has suddenly given signs of unsafety; or the main-track is blocked by some trifling accident to a freight-train, and five hundred or six hundred passengers in the night expresses East and West can not pass each other; a hundred worse things than those may have happened. To put on his clothes and set out for the *dépôt* is, as the novelists say, the work of an instant.

I have always thought it an unfavorable feature of electricity, that it has the power of conveying messages after one has left his office and gone home. If there were some counteracting power in darkness to prevent the operation of the electric current after sunset, it would be a sweet boon.

Having surmounted the difficulty which interrupted the working of the line, by slewing the track, under-pinning the bridge, ditching the cars, or in some other way suggested by experience, advised train dispatchers, division superintendents, and other subordinates of the necessary action to be taken under the circumstances, the general superintendent may

be excused, it being 8 A.M., if he so far forgets his duty to the railroad as to eat his breakfast.

That disposed of, the master mechanic, the car superintendent, the track superintendent, the general freight agent, the general passenger agent, the purchaser of stores, the fuel agent, and other officials come along, all wanting to consult with him on matters affecting their departments; outsiders hanging around in what they consider "coigns of vantage," to catch him when he gets through with that other man.

The man with the patent car-coupler, the patent switch, patent axle-box packing, new lubricators, patent brake, car-window fasteners, car-locks; the agent for the newest thing out in the labor-saving way, is "all there;" the discontented shipper who wants a special rate because he regularly ships two ounces of tobacco a day, is there; the man who believes the fair thing is not done by him because his competitor over the way seems to get along better, is there; the man who can't get cars enough, the man who has been charged demurrage, the man who has a claim for personal injuries, the man who has lost his trunk, are all there. The interesting woman, who wants a pass because she is an orphan, stands timidly by; the man who has been insulted by the conductor, and will take a season pass and say no more about it, is there too; and the messenger is constantly running to him with telegrams.

It is chronicled that office-seekers actually swarmed down the chimney, and crawled between Abraham Lincoln's legs. The general superintendent is beset somewhat in the same way.

He is button-holed as he turns a corner—noiselessly surrounded while he is busy writing a dispatch—fenced in by importunate applicants on every hand.

At such a juncture, if he have an engagement on the line, it is well to execute a flank movement, a sort of leap for life on the rear car of a passing train. The besetted man is free again.

Then, with his short-hand clerk, he can get a chance at his correspondence. The ready writer opens his bag, which is bursting with letters; and the general superintendent, taking them as they come, rapidly dictates his replies and instructions to all whom the matters affect.

The way in which some such men, with the assistance of a good stenographer, get through an immense pile of correspondence, is what is vulgarly called a "caution" to less ready men. They will dictate sixty letters in twenty-five minutes, some long and some short, containing perhaps five thousand words altogether; give the reply to a long letter while in the act of reading it; and arrive at yours truly when concluding with truly yours.

Railroad-men who can put business through in that kind of way, as A. Ward would say, are the sort of railroad-men to get through that kind of business.

Here is a problem. The train is going forty miles an hour, the short-hand clerk is writing at the rate of two hundred words a minute. Forty miles an hour is two-thirds of a mile, or 1176.33 yards per minute—over 16 yards a second. Now, by multiplying 1176.33 by 200, we arrive at the extraordinary number of 335,266.00. What does that mean?

A ready correspondent, accustomed to dictate to a stenographer, will reply to thirty letters while another man is making up his mind what kind of answer to make, or patiently puzzling over the proper turning of a phrase; or while a woman would be contemplating the address, and wondering who the letter could be from, when she might find out instantly by opening it, unless it were anonymous.

A recent writer observes that during the past few years there has been very great impetus given to the study of short-hand in the United States, chiefly owing to the demand for short-hand writers—a demand which is certain to increase in the future.

In our great cities there is hardly a public office of any sort where one or more short-hand writers are not to be found, to the mutual advantage of employers and employed.

To the employer it affords a pleasant and rapid way of getting through that portion of his work which most hard-working men find irksome, while the short-hand writer has the easiest and most certain way of learning a business or profession thrown open to him.

In no other possible way can a lad just entering an office gain the same speedy and thorough knowledge of the working of that office than as the short-hand clerk of the head or manager, and especially is this the case with those who have to enter the world early and without influence. From the very nature of the work, he is thrown in constant communication with his employer, and in the majority of cases becomes his most confidential clerk.

In this country, short-hand writers are now employed on all the railways of importance. Most of them began life as office lads, and in a few years became private secretaries; and it is safe to say that nine-tenths of them owe to their knowledge of short-hand their escape from years of drudgery on scanty salaries.

Wherever there is a large amount of correspondence to be done, there is room for short-hand clerks—in Government offices, law courts, banks, newspaper, express and mercantile offices; and in these offices positions can be found for all who will perfect themselves in the art.

It requires considerable practice to dictate letters to a short-hand clerk well; the rapidity with which the speaker finds his words taken down is apt to surprise and confuse him, and he finds he can not keep the young man busy.

Such an attempt to dictate as the following is awful to the expert short-hand writer :

[Clerk just engaged at \$1200 a year to help Mr. Pomposus with his correspondence.]

Pomposus. "Prepare to take down a letter."

Short-hand writer is annoyed by this; he is always ready to take down a letter. That's what he is paid for.

P. (dictating loudly). "Sir!" (*Short-hand writer starts*). "Have you got that?"

Short-hand Writer. "Yes."

P. "I didn't see you writing!"

S. "I hope you don't think I'm a ——?"

P. "Just let me see it."

S. points out a microscopic circle at one end of what looks like a stray eyelash.

P. "Yes. Ah, of course. I see. How far had we got?"

S. "Sir."

P. "I say how far had we got? (*Getting angry.*)

S. "I say, 'Sir.'"

P. "Well, rub it out. Put 'Dear Sir;' we had

better be civil. Say 'My dear Sir'—'My dear Sir'—No, that I won't! Confound the fellow! Write to him stiffly, stiff as starch; say— Now, are you ready? Well then, go on. 'Sir,—On my return from New York, your communication has been laid before me.' No, don't say that; say, 'New York is laid before me on returning from your communication.' No, that won't do; say, 'Your communication has been laid before me on my return from New York.' No, don't say New York—I'm not bound to tell the fellow where I've been to; say, 'Your communication has been laid before me.' Got that? Very well, keep it. Now, let's see what we had better say next? Just read over what you've got—if you can " (offensively).

S. "Your communication has been laid before me."

P. "Quite right; you take down letters splendidly. Young man, I guess I'll finish this letter myself; and I'll give you another trial to-morrow. You'll soon get on, if you persevere."

It is needless to say that the expert short-hand writer did not choose to keep his situation. He would rather accept one-third of the pay from a man who could talk one hundred and eighty words a minute than be pestered by the blundering reiterations and alterations of such a thick-head as Pompo-

sus. P. also came to the conclusion that a short-hand writer was a nuisance—he got the words down too mighty quick.

The general superintendent has got through his morning letters, and is revolving in his mind the necessity of increasing the rolling stock of the company, or a knotty point in some traffic agreement with a connecting road, when he is startled by the somewhat coarse inquiry of a stock shipper who has ferreted him out, "When that 'ere claim of his is going to be paid?" and "Guesses he'd better talk the thing right eout, then and thar."

The superintendent gives a sigh of resignation as the short-hand clerk produces the papers in the case; and, after a good deal of discussion, the stock shipper is informed that his claim is worth \$2000.43, which will be paid—no more and no less.

"Wa'al neow," says the stock shipper, "you've ciphered that down fine. I put it down at consid'ble more; but I always shipped this way. I like the road and I like you, so I guess I'll just take it. You can strike off the 43 cents. I want to be kinder liberal."

The superintendent no sooner leaves the cars than he is surrounded by people wanting something. He discusses the business of some, makes appointments with others, keeps the telegraph wires busy with his messages, attends a convention of railroad managers,

and returns in the evening to head-quarters—riding on the engine, so as to observe the merits of a newly-applied air-brake.

He would be glad to go home, but that is impossible. A crowd is waiting for him; some of them have been waiting since the morning, when he rather abruptly left them. They must all be attended to.

A large package of letters has accumulated during his absence; some of them will not wait, so the shorthand writer—who wrote out the previous lot while the convention was sitting—gets another dose.

A few more telegrams have to be answered, a few final stragglers talked with, and, glad to feel a lull in the pressure of the day, the general superintendent goes somewhat wearily home.

The fire burns brightly; wife smiles: "Well, William, what will you have for tea—a mutton-chop, or some oysters?"

Perhaps he says, "Well, of the two I'll take both—the oysters first."

Soon afterward he can say with the poet,

"My pipe is lit, my grog is mixed,
The curtain's drawn, and all is snug;
Old Pussy in her elbow-chair,
And Tray reposing on the rug."

But this repose may not last long. At times there appears to be a fatality affecting even the best-man-

aged railroad, accident after accident, affording the general superintendent no rest. Suddenly there comes a rap at the door—a telegram: car off the track—main-line blocked—night express delayed—what's to be done? Shall we do this, or shall we do that?

He has to lay down that pipe and leave that grog; likewise that house where all is snug—that cat a-purring in the chair—that dog reposing on the rug; run up stairs and kiss the children, put on his ear-flaps, say good-night to his disappointed wife, and go out into the blinding snow and bitter frost to join the auxiliary—to go to the scene of difficulty, and, during the bleak hours of night, use his energies and experience to put things straight, and clear the track.

APPLICATIONS FOR PASSES.

Probably one of the most troublesome duties of the general superintendent is the necessity of reading and answering the shoals of applications for passes which are constantly pouring in on him. The following are specimens of many of these communications.

The first is from a gentleman whom the superintendent has never heard of before, but who evidently thinks he can get the documents by a little facetiousness:

"DEAR SIR,—I am going West. My hat's chalked on most roads; can you chalk?

"Ever of thou, * * * * *"

The following is from one who tries the pathetic style:

"SIR,—'Man's inhumanity to man makes kountless 1,000,000 murn,' as the poic says, so does my wife—in fac have been treeted skaly out West wich we was injooiced to cum here under promise, we would not ask if i was not a kinder railroad man—in fac we wanter go East and money's tite. I don't ask as a rite, but would like you to male us the papers and oblige

"Yours respectfully, and so is my wife,

"* * * * *"

The next makes application on account of his extensive freight business over the line:

"SIR,—I ship piles of stuff over your road, and I ought to get a pass. Have got one over most roads. Send it to Cheekville P.O. The stuff I ship is a *sarve* for drawing corns. If you have got any I'll stop and fix you up strate. Make it for self and lady—my lady operates on her own seck. Telegraph as to corns to 5th Avenue Hotel.

"Yours and cetry, * * * * *"

The following is from the editor of an unknown paper publisher, in an unknown place called Smallville, inclosing an extract from his sheet, calculated, as he thinks, to tickle the documents out of the general superintendent:

"SIR,—I inclose you with this an extract from my influential and high-toned journal, which you will see has allusion to yourself. I think I was not going too far when I stated that you were the 'brightest star in the railroad firmament;' 'that your practical knowledge was unequaled;' and your 'executive ability of an order that would qualify a Napoleon, a Jackson, or a Washington.

"I was also erring on the side of modesty when I stated that 'your accomplished wife and interesting children were rich jewels in your wreath of fame, and the eclipsing constellation of the social circle.'

"Send pass for my wife, her mother-in-law and grandmother, and nurse and six children, over your well-managed road, on Tuesday, sure. Don't include me—can not leave my arduous and weighty duties in this district.

"Yours to command, * * * * *"

If the effusive writer of the above does not receive

the passes he requests, the next issue of his paper contains something like the following:

"We are sorry to hear such bad accounts of the — Railroad. A short time ago it was a pleasure for us to be able to speak of it in terms of commendation. The track is simply execrable, and an injunction should be served on the company not to run precious human lives over it at a greater speed than four miles an hour. The cars, also, are more like piggeries. Under the present management the road has gone to the bad. We can account in no other way for this almost sudden change of affairs than by the rumor that one high in authority is the victim of excessive habits. We once had occasion to speak of him in laudatory terms; but, painful as the truth is, it must be told: he reeks with gin and bad tobacco, and a more melancholy sight was never our lot than that of this broken-down, bleary-eyed, pimply-faced, blotchy-nosed imbecile shuffling along the streets, followed by his raw-boned, draggled-tailed wife, and their unwholesome offspring."

This is very touching:

"RESPECTED SIR,—I hanker after going to see the grave of my poor brother. Let me kiss him for his

mother. I am the only dependent upon a widowed mother and orphan. I want to bedew his grave with tears, but I can not do it without I get a pass over your road. I'm sure you won't refuse when I say again, let me go to Johnsonville, Maine, and kiss him for his mother—leastwise the sod. If you can't go the whole hog, can you go a half-fare ticket?

"Yours in affliction, * * * * *"

Here is an application from a gentleman, who apparently is very disinterested:

"MY DEAR SIR,—I hear your road is improved wonderful, but I take no man's opinion; I want to see for myself. Mail me a pass, and I'll take a trip over it, and let you know what I think.

"Truly yours, * * * * *"

DISMISSAL.

We are told to invoke blessings on the man who invented letters. It is a hard thing to do, after having written letters all day, to find out you have to continue doing so all the evening to keep up with your business. A fretful man in such a case is likely to bestow maledictions on the inventive faculty of Professor Cadmus.

A freight agent at an important station on an En-

glish railway had a shorter way of disposing of his correspondence than by short-hand. He put his letters in the fire, and never answered them at all.

His superior officers, thinking their commands had not reached him, sent copies, and called for replies; but they did not come, although they did call for them.

A considerable portion of the company's business was becoming stagnated, and the machinery of the department was hampered in its action, and chaos was imminent.

At this juncture, Mr. Piddington, general freight agent, thought he would have other copies made of all the letters he had written, and, as he was not personally known to the recusant freight agent, take them himself and see what became of them.

He started off, and duly arrived at the office of his subordinate, and found him sitting in his comfortable office, in the fragrance of a choice Havana, apparently enjoying his ease with dignity.

"The general freight agent," said Mr. Piddington, "has found his letters addressed to you go astray; and I have therefore thought better to make sure you get them."

"Ah," said the imperturbable freight agent, receiving about a hundred duplicates, "he does, does he? The old fool is always sending me his letters. This

is the way I treat his stationery;" and suiting the action to the word, threw the whole bundle into the fire.

The next document the man received was his dismissal; and if he had put that into the fire also, he might have been in the company's employ now; but he had the weakness to read it, and the result was inevitable.

THE CONCLUSION.

There are other men and things connected with the working of our Modern Highway which might be entertaining to refer to; but it was not a part of my intention to go over the whole range of the subject. I desired to present a few simple sketches of the salient features of a distinct calling—"Railroad Working"—which would perhaps be interesting to others besides those belonging to the new social class of "Railroad Men."

THE END

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